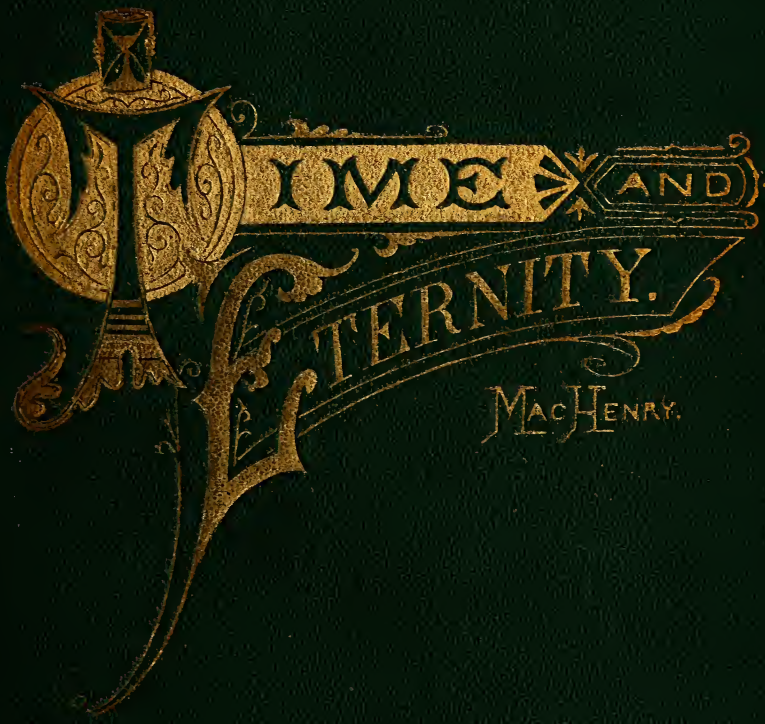
TIME AND ETERNITY.
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TIME AND ETERNITY

A POEM

BY

GEORGE MAC-HENRY

SAN FRANCISCO
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1871

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I.

LET me behold the Beautiful and True!
O let me dream of Paradise and Thee,
Grand Archetypal Poet! None can view
The future in the present, none can see,
But prophets, visions of eternity;
For to Thy councils Thou hast them alone
Called, and reveal'st to them what is to be:
Yet on my spirit breathe Thy benison,
That I may read the spells which Thou hast to them
shown.

II.

Then, startled from a slumberous lethargy,
Straight with his mental ear the dreamer hears,
And his eye's filled with inward phantasy,
So that what's hidden photographed appears,
Distinct, on earth, or in the starry spheres;
Darkness a moving panorama limns,
And silence speaks; the heart then knows no fears
And feels no sorrows, but exultant, trims
His wings of fire to mount where seraphs sing their
hymns.

III.

When the sun shines man nothing scans but earth,
In the moon's ray of opalescent sheen
Some twinkling stars steal out, yet few come forth;
But in the shadow of the cone terrene
Orbs beyond number and beyond thought are seen:
So in the darkness of my solitude
My soul inspired surveys the Heavens serene,
And all that's bright and beautiful and good
Finds in the poetry of Thy infinitude.

IV.

The space dividing matter from the mind
But typifies the greater distance far
Between the love fraternal of mankind
And genius that is selfish. Hence we are
Idolaters of Talent's meteor glare,
A painted vapor that explodes to wind;
But worshippers of Virtue's Morning Star,
The harbinger of light and life combined,
Jesus, the Prince of Peace, who taught us to be kind.

V.

Then brilliant though the gleam of genius be,
Since in the purer flame of moral grace
'Tis quenched, as rivers rolling in the sea,
O give me moral strength to run Life's race,
And reach its goal in Thine Own dwelling place,
The home of all who think and act good deeds,
With Thy name "Holy" marked upon my face!
My corn permit not to be choked with weeds,
Nor let my fame be blown as blasts from broken reeds!

VI.

Through flashing billows of the clouds that shed
A silvery spray along their wake, allow
Thine aerial messengers my nightly bed
To visit, and with finger touch my brow,
That in Thy knowledge I may wiser grow,
And learn the meaning of the sacred Rood,
The symbol of the Martyrdom of Woe,
And Triumph over Evil of the Good—
How sorrow bravely borne may win beatitude.

VII.

Still through the peopled silence of my dreams
Conduct me to the Paradise of Sleep,
Where Fancy's marvelous microcosm beams
With radiant shapes of beauty to the deep
Cerulean gulfs, where sceptered angels sweep
In gold and purple, and their pennons weigh
Bands of bright cherubs o'er the beetling steep
Of Chaos, or in rainbow colors play,
And Heaven's belfry chimes, and life is holiday.

VIII.

Ah, when I first invoked Thy gracious name,
Hope beckoned smiling; but soon trembling fear,
That blanched with awe and reverential shame,
Possessed me, lest in my sublime career
Beyond this nether globe I failed to steer
Where Thou art shrined in glory, to be cast
Confounded back; but through the mystic sphere
Thou led'st me, else ere I had venturous passed
The realms of space I'd sunk bewildered and aghast.

IX.

Let me the honored praise of virtue sing,
The sanctitude of faith, the beauty bright
Of meekness, and of Thee supreme, the King
Omnipotent, enthroned in living light!
Thy face is not vouchsafed to human sight,
Not so Thine attributes: these Thee declare,
Though Thou be clothed invisible in night,
A God of Love, whose heart is everywhere,
That we Thy children are, and Thou dost hear our prayer.

X.

Then Abba, whatsoever may betide
Thy suppliant, whether for a little while
To live in weal or woe, let me confide
In Thee, alone, and Thy approving smile;
For pride and vanity are oft the wile
That lures to ruin; but Thy love is praise!
Pleased if my brother should reward my toil
With his applause, but better pleased to raise
My head to Thee to tire with amaranthine bays.

XI.

For what to me is fame, whose youth is past,
And hope to azure fields before me gone,
Avant-courier of glory, while I'm cast
The stream of Life's tumultuous waters on,
That flow forever to the sea unknown!
I hear the breakers dashing on that shore,
I float upon the misty tide alone,
I gaze into the darkness to explore;
A glimpse of light chinks through the cloudy corridor.

XII.

And if that dim haze be the House of Death,
  And thither through the gloaming be the ford,
Whose passage by the dreaded Shibboleth
  Is guarded, teach me how to say the word
  Aright, so that I may escape the sword
Of grim Abaddon to Thy Sanctuary,
  Where Thou art of Thy saints redeemed the Lord,
And all the shining worlds that roll on high
The Elysium is, where they sojourn in perfect joy.

XIII.

Let me then turn to Thee, and grant my tongue
  The voice of light, that swelling to Thy Throne,
With fervent eloquence of worship strung,
  As Alpha and Omega Thee alone
  May venerate, and as Thy Prophet Son
Revere our brother, and with him commune
  Of duty, and, in choral unison,
Sweet music of the mind in metric rune,
With sacred bards harmonious psalmody attune.

XIV.

I thank Thee for existence, and that I
  Am graced with sense intelligent to see
Thee in Thy works—in the gem-flowered sky,
  On the star-spangled earth, and in the sea
  Unfathomable of infinity;
Immense the privilege, enormous bliss,
  To be assured I am an entity—
To read Thy Bible in the world-abyss,
Thy missal in Thy works wherever nature is.

XV.

Since had I been the inestimable gem
Set in the crown of earth's great emperor,
What would to me have been that diadem?
Nothing: embalmed in life-preserving myrrh,
My soul had then lain in its sepulchre,
Buried in sleep. But not to know alone
That which is seen in Nature's theatre
Is mine, but there to hope where all 's unknown,
And trust that all is best whate'er Thy will be done.

XVI.

Then should the bread of life which Thou hast given
Be turned by man to stone, and should there be
Storms, and a frown along the face of Heaven;
Ah, should there be a dark Gethsemane,
With awful terrors, e'en a Calvary
By fate reserved for me, O let me feel,
Although exposed to human obloquy,
Whatever blows adversity may deal,
There is no mortal wound but Thy kind balm can heal!

XVII.

Let not my faith become a blind belief,
But righteous trust in Thy benignant Dove;
That when Thou strik'st Thine anger will be brief,
But infinite Thy tender mercies prove,
However Thou mayst chasten or reprove.
The terrible of sin is our remorse,
The beautiful of goodness Thy dear love,

Our scrip and staff, while to the eternal source
Of bliss through heavenly courts life holds its endless
course.

XVIII.

The watch and ward of my soul's citadel,
Let Hope stand firm, against the present bane
Braced in proof armor, against sin and hell,
Reliant that the trial is not vain
Which I with name of evil would profane.
Ah, when my strength subdued was stormed by death,
Thy buckler guarded life in spite of pain,
To live for Thy work with unfailing faith,
Though by the arrows pierced that sting my mortal
breath.

XIX.

This friendly earth is but my foster-mother,
That nurses me with unremitting care,
And every sentient creature is my brother,
Who all receive from her a filial share
Of guardian succor, but Thy children are;
Thou art my Father, more than ever was
My human parent, and by Thee I'm heir
Of immortality, when Time shall pass
As shadow o'er the earth, and shake his empty glass.

XX.

My Father! yet my Mother, too, Thou art!
For Thou dost feed me, clothe me, tend me; Thy
Breast is my nightly pillow, Thy kind heart
My daily store, and Thy maternal eye,
To watch Thine errant child, is always by!

Why should I faint in agony of fear?
Why dread the present or futurity?
Is not Thy ready hand to save me near?
Is not the darling babe unto its mother dear?

XXI.

The Sabbath bliss of Jesus' death-bequest,
His peace grant unto me, that noon and eve
Like Isaac, I may walk the fields, and rest
My thoughts on Nature, and all things that live;
And, with a mind all full of eyes, perceive
Thy wisdom in the stone, the leaf, the flower;
From every sound and smell fresh hope receive,
New strength and firmer faith; and feel Thy power
And Thy love fall on me as on earth heaven's shower.

XXII.

Shall no fair nymph string roses of sweet song
To weave a garland for my laureate head?
Shall no kind muse, with soft complaining tongue
Invoke the memory of my buried shade?
Then let my ashes by the shore be laid,
And I will list the nereids of the wave
On spirit-harps chant requiems for the dead,
The laverock's choir in morn's cathedral nave,
And angels whisper Heaven's secrets o'er my grave.

THE GATHERING OF THE JEWS.

CANTO I.

I.

WHERE Bethany extends her groves of palms,
Her vineyards filtering the sun and dew,
And fields of maize that shake their plumy haulms,
Nestled in gold Hesperian, loomed to view
A flat-roofed mansion, from whose portal threw
A hundred colored lamps their festive light,
Twinkling and dancing in the horizon blue,
Or, through the tremulous foliage, to the sight
Sparkled, as shooting stars that flit athwart the night:

II.

And where the crowning miracle of Love
Dead Lazarus to life raised from the dead,
When the veins shrunken felt the voice to move
Their dried-up currents, and the sleeping head
Woke from its trance, and Death in terror fled;
Where gentle Mary washed the Master's feet
With tears, and spikenard upon them shed,
And found a wisdom in the service sweet—
In that same pastoral village troops of revelers meet.

III.

It was a wedding festival they held;
And, issuing from the gate, with myrtle crowned—
Sweet Aphrodite's love-star, as of eld—
A group of gay and giddy youths were bound
In a procession through the hamlet round.
A welcome blithe saluted them from buds
And blossoms, which a tongue in perfume found,
As they skipped through the alleys of the woods,
Or by the laureled banks of marble-channeled floods;

IV.

On the same pathway where, with garments spread,
And branches strewn, his peace-triumphant way,
While victor's palms were waved above his head,
The King of Glory took, in meek array,
Serene with love, resigned without dismay,
Though conscious Pharisees had set their snare,
And traitor spies were watching to betray,
While jubilant hosannahs rung the air,
On to his bloody cross, with heart-forgiving prayer.

V.

The fife screamed shrill, and sharp the bugle blew,
Scaring the leveret, as it skimmed the mead,
And frightening wizard bats, that, squealing, flew
In curves abrupt and broken overhead,
Hiding in nooks of barns for very dread;
The speckled lizard keeked with glistening eyes
From out the wicket of his mossy bed,
And hushed the nightingale her symphonies,
To list their roundelays, and watch their revelries.

VI.

In the innumerous orchestra of leaves
Trills the cicada her soprano hymn,
A sylvan hurdy-gurdy; round pent-house eaves
Flutters the moth, in masquerading trim,
Who moped the sunny hours, a hermit grim,
In some dark cell, by prying eyes unseen;
Light webs of gossamer, in arcades dim,
By sylphs are woven from the moonbeams' sheen,
And on the hammock rocks in state the Fairy Queen.

VII.

The exuberant gladness of the marriage prime
Was theirs, when joy, engarlanded with flowers,
Light-hearted, scatters from the glass of time
The golden sands which are the passing hours,
Such as once shone on Eden's blissful bowers,
When angels sung the hymeneal ode,
And cast on earth their eavenly gifts in showers,
As Eve, fresh molded from the hand of God,
By guiding love was led to where her spouse abode.

VIII.

Light were the clouds spun by the limber wind
With silver threads; the harvest moon arose
Above the Hill of Zion, which seemed to bind
The horned diadem across her brows;
In the fused pane the dying daylight glows,
With wreathes of blooming fire the olives flower.
Do evening skies but still the heart till grows
The soul more holy? Is there not the dower
Of beauty and of love, that's theirs for evermore?

IX.

Yes, there is beauty, and there's love around,
In heaven, on earth, and in the depths below;
God's holy temple is the flower-paved ground,
As well as star-lit domes; both equal show
What of His might and mercy man should know,
Who is himself a thought divine, and sent
On mission nature to explore, and grow
Familiar with her secrets, and present
To others truths which to himself are only lent.

X.

Who gilt the sun, and silver-typed the moon?
Who incremated Yule in shroud of snow?
Who paradised the greenery of June,
That youth and beauty into love might blow,
And tender thoughts Elysium make below?
Why was space formed the theatre of life,
And life the vehicle of joy and woe?
Why birth should teem for death to be so rife?
Why should existence be a battle-field of strife?

XI.

Ah, little pondered they such themes sublime!
Little they recked of human destinies!
Of small account they held the lapse of time!
But frolicked on their way as colibris,[1]
That preen their coats when the first cuckoo cries,
When hare-bell meadows purple into bloom,

---

[1] The cinnyris osea, the sun-bird of Syria, a species of humming bird.

And Love's own spirit is abroad, and hies
To every creature, and awakes the tomb,
Till quickens silent dust in Nature's fecund womb.

XII.

And he who proudly led the nuptial train
Was a young Rabbi of the Talmud law,
Adoram called, whom love's enamored pain,
A willing captive, held in pleasing awe,
E'er since the handsome Zilia first he saw:
Hope into fairy-land rose-bloomed the earth,
Deft Harlequin, as lithe he tripped the shaw,
Each moment to enchanted thoughts gave birth,
Till in some elfin isle his spirit gamboled forth.

XIII.

Scarcely he knew whether he trod the sward,
The buoyant water, or the moon-lit air;
The jasmin arbors steamed of balm and nard,
The oleanders shook their scented hair—
But for their tender wiles he had no care;
He heard not Philomela's gurgling sigh,
For his whole soul was filled with Zilia fair;
Love's philtre he had drained till it was dry;
He only wished for wings, that he might to her fly.

XIV.

The past had o'er the present thrown no shade,
Before its steps no gloom the future cast;
All things looked happy, and sweet music made,
And, ere a breath of storm had o'er it passed,
Seemed come again God's garden, and would last
Through halcyon tides in endless spring serene;

No burning drought nor flood nor thunder blast;
But, building rainbows in the clouds were seen
The laughing hours, peopling with Peri shapes the scene.

XV.

Ah, shall the youth of beauty ever fade
To wrinkled years, and, as a phantom sink
To fearful nothingness? The plant is dead
Which did the humid cloud's ambrosia drink,
And at the stars as friends congenial wink,
Nodded to winds that toyed among its blooms,
And when the noon looked on it did not blink;
But now its stalk shakes, and its leaf consumes:
So rattle musty bones of saints in charnel tombs.

XVI.

Where are the builders of Tuhanaco,
The architects of dœdal temples, vast
In ruined pride, where palms and orchids grow
Crumbling to dust, and spectres of the past
Glide through the emerald gloom, and to the blast
Whisper the sounds of names forgotten quite?
The Indian tells how ancient giants cast
Their huge foundations in a single night,
Ere the bright orb of day kindled his vital light.

XVII.

But why should dismal thoughts on joy intrude?
Yet so it ever is; and when most blest,
Then are we most in melancholy mood;
For Disappointment never is at rest,
But after smiling Hope is aye in quest,

And follows as her shadow. Hence away
Grim Sadness, in thy mourning sables drest!
I will not be thy cloistered monk this day:
Crown me with green vine leaves and ivy berries gay.

XVIII.

As homewards they returned, the parapets
And gilded terrace roof from gardens rose,
Like saffron cirrhi when the daylight sets
Swim on the summit of the cloud that glows
With Taprobana ruby. How still repose
The date trees in the moonshine! everywhere
There is a spell of slumber; in swoons doze
The citrons, till a gust swings in the air
The incense in their censers, breathing as a prayer.

XIX.

Now the port-cullis gate of Heaven unlock
Night's sentries, and the starry hosts, arrayed
With flaming banners, to their stations flock,
Around the Throne of Glory to parade;
None from their ranks, foot-sore, have ever strayed!
But all, caparisoned, before that Eye
Which never in forgetful sleep is laid,
Are marshaled in the azure fields of sky,
And file in columns spread throughout eternity.

XX.

When at the porch they had arrived, they were
Received by Caled with a hearty will,
Officious, and some show of fussy stir—
For he was garrulous and jovial still.

"With sparkling vintage amber goblets fill!"
Exclaimed the aged sire of Zilia; "Sip
The balmy essence summer skies distil
From golden dewdrops that through sunshine drip!
The merry elfin beads will leap to kiss thy lip!"

XXI.

And then he ushers them into a hall,
Where waited them his household and his friends.
And Levites bearing up the nuptial pall.
Scarce were they seated, ere a whisper sends
Its furtive greeting round, and the bride bends
Her graceful form before their dazzled eyes;
But, ere her gracious salutation ends,
She pales and blushes, as the thoughts arise
Of childhood's home beloved, and future promised joys.

XXII.

In pomp of beauty gorgeously attired,
She took all hearts, and shed delight around,
And all with ardor amiable inspired;
Yet was her countenance bent to the ground,
And her mind holy sweet communion found
In silent prayer. A spray of orange flowers
With argent studs her raven tresses bound,
As stars with diamonds tire the midnight hours,
And a long veil of lace fell down in snowy showers:

XXIII.

A carkanet of pearls, with mimic life
Heaved on her bosom, as the heart beneath
Trembled with pleasure to be made a wife.

The sacred sanctities of birth and death,
The problem of existence, to her faith
Were sacraments transcending reason, still
Her trust in Providence was not a breath
Unmeaning, nor the harbinger of ill;
And, listening to its voice, she yielded to His will.

XXIV.

So faith o'er doubt prevails, of things unseen
And mysteries occult the prophet blest,
Who lightens darkness with his prescient sheen.
The cherub Hope was hovering o'er her breast,
Like the connubial ring-dove round her nest:
Chaste as the pious rapture of the nun
Was the dear love her conscious soul confessed;
Pure as the kiss that waked Endymion,
Yet warm as Cytherea by favored mortal won.

XXV.

O Love, whose power extends o'er land and sea,
With skies coeval, terminous with space,
Conqueror of all that was, and is to be;
Who first didst see the Heavenly Father's face,
And him, rejoicing in thy charms, embrace;
And in the courts of bliss with Wisdom play,
In coexistent sempiternal grace,
Through the unending course of hourless day,
Ere worlds were sown as dust along the Milky Way;

XXVI.

Soft as the swan-down where the Summer sleeps,
Sweet as the musky murmur of his breath,

Sad as the tears the sullen Winter weeps,
Bright as the dimpled smiles that Spring enwreath,
Tripping through clover lawn and hawthorn heath,
Gay as the Autumn's laughter in the sky,
Fierce as the phantom frown of grizzly Death,
Fair as a Seraph, beckoning on high,
Art thou, the soul of life and immortality.

XXVII.

Under the canopy Adoram led
His bride, and on her finger placed the ring,
The magic circle; then the rites were read
Of ceremonial laud and thanksgiving.
But now a fictile vase the Levites bring,
Which the groom on the tesselated ground
Dashes with crackling din; of everything
The mortal type, where nought is human found
That ever can escape the stroke of Death's last wound.

XXVIII.

The holiday of nature marriage is,
Of earth's high festivals the chief and best,
The sole remaining jubilee of bliss
Left us of Eden, when with angels blest
Man converse held, and Paradise possessed;
May morning dapper, brisk, and debonnair,
When all things jocund are, in liveries drest,
Wooing and wooed, kaleidoscope of air,
The wizard's lantern, throwing idols everywhere.

XXIX.

A gracious privilege of juvenescence
Is to be gay; its morning cannot see

Its cloudy sunset; and its native essence,
The prime elixir of life's chemistry,
The mirage of materiality,
Is Hope, that, with an astrologic spell,
Reads, through the horoscope, futurity,
Descries the distant still delectable,
And finds the lovely are forever lovable.

XXX.

And of bright teraphim none is so bright
As loving hearts, when, on the sacred hearth,
The torch of Hymen they propitious light,
Their constant lode-star; truly showing forth
The espousals of the ether with the earth,
The nuptial ring which universal Love
Girdles around the cosmic system's girth,
When out of elements the germins move,
Pullule in depths below, and brood in heights above.

XXXI.

Marriage is chaste and holy, and supplies
Earth with inhabitants, and Heaven with souls:
Many an empty region mid the skies,
Worlds embryonic, hatching at the poles,
And at the ecliptic, and the zenith's goals,
New orbs, fomenting lie, and wait to hold
Of terrene races the superfluous shoals,
Where mortals immortality unfold,
As seeds to flowers burst in fructifying mold.

XXXII.

He who hath life received, and will not give
The boon to others, perpetrates a wrong,

And pilfers Nature of her purpose. "Live!"
Is but one half the law: "Create a strong
And moral progeny, in succession long
As are the hours of time!" but supplements
The other half the code, and speaks with tongue
Suasive miraculous arbitrements,
And is on hearts writ, not on marble monuments.

XXXIII.

And there is joy in Heaven whene'er there 's born
A child on earth, for then another son
Is born to God, whom not the angels scorn
To recognize as brother, or as one
Of their own kin, but gladly him they own
Their playmate, and a fellow heir of grace;
Another temple built of mind, not stone,
Where is enshrined the likeness of God's face,
And where His incarnated shadow they may trace.

XXXIV.

The feast was spread. There was the common dish
Of lamb pilau with heaps of saffroned rice,
And, fried in olive oil, all sorts of fish;
The desert quail, stewed in a mess with spice,
And wild blue pigeons; cates preserved in ice,
And candied sweetmeats: filled with ruby wine
Were vases bossed with gems and pearls of price—
With scent of mellow summer breathed the pine,
With beauty's blushing cheek glowed peach and nectarine.

XXXV.

And round the table glancing œiliads fling

A wealth of sparkling graces, smiling lips,
Red with the dewy roses of their spring,
And busts symmetrical, that far eclipse
The unresponsive marble. Who but sips
The lotus of that mouth delicious sighs
For draughts of richer redolence, where dips
Love his whole pharmacy of balsam joys,
The nectar Hymen yields, and only Love supplies.

XXXVI.

Next came the banquet of sweet sounds, to feed
The purer sense, ethereal and refined;
The jingling timbrel, and the piping reed,
And the horn's silver fanfare tranced the mind
With pleasaunce as the tuberose drugs the wind.
Adoram sang the canticle of fair
Abishag, the young Shulamite, who pined
In the king's harem, for her thoughts were where
She'd breathed with him she loved the joy of mountain air.

XXXVII.

The brightest days distil the heaviest dew;
Though thunders come with clouds, yet on a clear
Calm eve of summer through the ether blue
Will the sheet lightning's sudden blaze appear.
The Future is a god whom mortals fear,
Yet fain would see; and the Unknown a sprite
With nameless terror armed, above the sphere
Enveloped in the caul of pregnant night,
Who hurl the shafts of fate, that wound where they alight.

XXXVIII.

Such were the scenes when to the threshold back
Of Abram outcast Hagar had returned,
While the pale crescent had retraced its track
To the steppes aboriginal it spurned,
And on the domes of mosques no longer burned;
When no more from the shaft of minaret,
His eyes toward the holy Mecca turned,
Was heard the muezzin call when sun was set
"Allah is God, and his great prophet Mahomet!"

XXXIX.

But every morn and evening to the skies
From the new Temple on Moriah's Hill
Curled the white, breath-like smoke of sacrifice
From tears of incense Indian trees distil,
But from no blood, forbidden life to kill;
Such code of mercy preludes fit his reign
Who shall all sacrifice in love fulfill,
Who all the world's imperial thrones shall gain,
When Zion shall be crowned queen of the earth's domain.

XL.

Now the wild Arab's tents are far withdrawn
To Sinai's rocks and Kedar's sandy plains,
And harps are strung in grove and dewy lawn,
And on the hills are heard exultant strains,
Loud hymns of praise, and sweet love's soft refrains;
For Israel dwells in peace, a happy race,
And 'neath the shade of olives careless drains
The odoriferous sun-blood, and his face
Is bright with pride, not slouched from undeserved disgrace.

XLI.

And where once Jacob roamed, and David reigned,
Now rules a chief judge, Himelek by name,
And Methulah, the priest, who had attained
To Zadok's station, and to Nathan's fame,
Attends the altar with perpetual flame;
But no more to the God-indwelling sheen,
When to the inner sanctuary he came,
That erst had stood the cherub's wings between,
Yearly atonement made to purge the people clean.

XLII.

"Then to and fro shall men run through the earth,
And shall increase in knowledge," are the words
Of unfallacious seer; and now goes forth
Steam's Pegasus along the road that girds
The world with iron zones as swift as birds
That steeple-chase the storm; and flaming sprites,
Subservient, flourishing cherubic swords,
Unfooted and unwinged, speed instant flights,
Invisible, down ocean depths, up mountain heights,

XLIII.

Through fields of air, through chambers of the rock;
And carry thoughts imponderable at command,
And write them on the dial of a clock
With a steel pen held in a fiery hand;
Mind questions distant mind, land answers land,
Moments outstretch months, and weeks outstrip years;
Now science waves around her magic wand;
And quicker in the veins though blood careers,
Yet longer man lives now, and more than man appears.

XLIV.

For all the elements, become his slaves,
Labor to do him corvee; he now reads
The current of the winds, and flow of waves;
The laws of life investigates; why seeds
Grow bread-corn, where the ground once littered weeds;
Why perish animals, and species die,
While others are evolved; with scales and reeds
He weighs and measures atoms and the sky,
And cons what kind of matter forms the worlds on high.

XLV.

Then in due season gave the Lord the rain,
The first and latter showers, that oil and wine
And harvests might be garnered, pulse and grain,
And herds and flocks, O Israel, might be thine,
And with the Balm of Gilead thy face shine,
Stranger to palace cares, exempt from pain
As when thou faithful kept'st the law divine,
When thine was every valley, hill and plain,
From the Euphrates' banks down to the Syrian main.

XLVI.

As Tarshish was thy merchant then, so now
Britain thee sends her iron, tin and lead;
To Sheba, through the sands thy camels plow
To fetch thee Indian shawls to dress thy head,
Cassia and myrrh and calamus to shed
Rich odors on thy clothes, and fume thy halls,
And to embalm with sweets the marriage bed,
Trinkets of gold to deck thy festivals,
And gems to ornament thy daughters at thy balls.

XLVII.

Thy caravans now travel to Cathay,
Thy ships to Gentile isles; wool, silk, and flax
Hamper thy stores, and thy bazaars display
The staples of the world, heaped up in stacks,
On which thou pay'st to kings no odious tax,
Nor fear'st their spleen to take what is thine own,
Nor dread'st, as once thy fathers did, their racks,
That started sinews, crushed the flesh and bone,
That they might with thy wealth tinsel a shameless
throne.

THE COUNCIL OF WAR.

CANTO II.

I.

"THE plow shall drive a furrow o'er their towers,
I'll sow their streets with salt, till not a blade
Of grass shall grow in their pavilioned bowers;
Their shops and palaces in ashes laid,
A wilderness for death to live in made;
Their celebrated Temple I will wreck,
And 'mid the ruins, in the pools shall wade
The bittern and the crane; and in the brake
The serpent curl his length, and wreath his spotted neck!"

II.

"Howl ye! for the day of destruction 's come!
I'll shake the earth, so that from out her place
Zion shall be removed, and in her tomb
Buried forever; I will sweep the race
As with a besom; pale shall be the face,
The hand shall tremble, and the heart shall faint
Of her proud daughters, with their mincing pace,

Tinkling their bangles, who with kohol[1] paint
The ogle of their eyne, and yet affect the saint."

III.

Such were the rabid words of hate that spoke
Gog of Mongolia, king and caliph both;
And, as he roared, he struck his breast, and woke
Black Hell, with diabolic furies wroth,
Till foamed his livid mouth with clotted froth;
Like a wild boar that grins, his tush he showed
Ferocious, and the bristly hairs that clothe
His scabrous chin tugged till his visage glowed,
And rough as stormy rack his beard disordered flowed.

IV.

To whom replied his vizier, Ryno, thus,
Prostrating himself reverently before
His venerated lord, the glorious
Suzerain of mighty chiefs, than monarch more
Distinguished and esteemed; for him adore
His subject thralls, who think his awful nod
Is fate's own fiat, and his grace implore;
Who fear his cruel and relentless rod,
And to him bow supine, their Delei Lama God.

V.

So much in even him had terror force
To tyrannize his nerves, that on his knees
Faltered his voice in deprecation hoarse,
Confused and tremulous; for he shuddering sees

---

[1] The sulphuret of antimony.

The color in his master's cheeks to freeze,
And phosphor from his elf-shot eyes to glow,
As sparkle of a murky night the seas;
And well he knew that tempest ne'er did blow,
But it portended death, or ruin, wreck and woe.

VI.

"They would not grant thy heralds thy request;
But dare against thy mandates to rebel,
And, under frivolous pretexts of pest,
Refuse thy forces in their land to dwell,
And will their passage, arms in hand, repel;
And Araby, where every palm-tree grove,
Each oasis and defile, spring and well
Is theirs, is garrisoned, where only move
Their caravans of trade, or harrying Bedouins rove."

VII.

"They are colleagued with every Frankish State,
And Albion, who possesses Hindostan,
The prize we covet, which makes her so great,
Is called in, as a skilled physician,
To heal their sickness; and the charlatan
Prescribes conversion to the Christian faith;
That they may Jesus, whom they deem but man,
Revere henceforth as God, and with the breath
Of penitential psalms atone his shameful death.

VIII.

"To think in iron, and to act in steel,
Is to dig gold from out the hearts of men,

Love from the hatred and the fear they feel;
Who rules as lion will o'er lambkins reign!
The king of birds was once the saucy wren!
Be deaf to pity, and to suffering blind,
Manure the earth with Jews and Christians slain,
And let the sweetest music of thy mind
Be freedom's dying curse and groans of human kind!"

IX.

"But what new scheme has England now on foot,
To thwart my cherished purpose, to invade
Her eastern empire, and beneath my boot
Crush out her name there with the native aid?"
This answer the astute premier then made:
"The Sea-Queen, surfeited, seeks not to extend
Her cumbrous conquests, or to force her trade;
But plots, with machinations without end,
To drive the Hebrew Tribes against thee to contend."

X.

"She sends her missionaries into their land,
She opens schools, and prints religious books,
Carries the circumcised from every strand,
From coral isles, and ocean's farthest nooks,
Back to Samaria's fount and Siloa's brooks,
Back to the verdant hills of Galilee,
To Joppa back, that from her window looks
Out on the waters of the tideless sea,
And back to Jordan's vale, and Hebron's flowery lea."

XI.

"Her grand armadas float in every port,
With pilgrims filled, returning to their home,
For they, with weary shoon, no more resort
To London's bloated towers, or wrecks of Rome,
Or to the glory of our gilded dome;[1]
No longer aliens at the stranger's hearth,
No more as Cainite murderers they roam,
Because they slew their brother, but their worth
And thrifty virtues are acknowledged through the earth."

XII.

"Phlebotomise their wealth, and take a spoil,
Such as at Delhi never Kouli took!
Their barns are warping with their corn and oil,
While their sword is become a pruning hook,
And their spear turned into a shepherd's crook."
So cunning counseled, and thus answered pride:
"Their scorn and insolence I will not brook;
Better for them that strangled they had died,
Or stabbed by Herod been, when from their mother's side"

XIII.

"They had been farrowed, or ghoul's eye looked on,
The plague had rot their litters; but I'll take
Their daughters captive, in derision crown
Their heads with nettles and sharp thorns, and make
My eunuchs whip them till their bones shall ache

[1] The dome of the Church of St. Sophia, converted into a mosque, at Constantinople.

And marrow quiver with the knout they wield;
Yet shall the fairest of the virgins slake
My thirst for lust, and these their charms shall yield,
And shall be tricked in pomp, that they my state may gild."

XIV.

"Send two fleet Tartars to demand the earth
And water, symbols of their servitude;
And if the swine refuse them, I'll let forth
My bloodhounds, who shall make a solitude
Where Zion in her greedy sty has stood
Till grown too fat. Meanwhile, to Scythia's plains
Dispatch my seal, and to the field of blood
Call all my territories and domains,
From hyperborean snows to equatorial rains;"

XV.

"From Irkoutsk and Archangel to Canton;
The swarms of Sericana, Thibet's hordes,
Mantchourian clans, from Obi to the Don,
Circassian chivalry and Turkish swords;
And greet of all my satrapies the lords,
And bid them to the feast that I prepare,
The banquet of the loathsome carrion birds
That snuff the tainted corpses in the air,
For where the carcass rots there is their festal fare."

XVI.

Before the moon was old a council, called
Of all the Sanhedrim, was held in state,
Where Himelek presided, unappalled,

Undiscomposed, although the couriers wait
An audience, to transmit their master's hate.
"Admit the messengers!" Thus he outspoke,
And thus the elder Mercury: "The great
Kahn, who the Dragon's hoary sceptre broke,
And lopped the Crescent's horns with his victorious stroke,"

XVII.

"Hath sent us, his ambassadors, to demand
This province, which, if ye submissive yield,
Ye still may keep, for he will not the land
Escheat; and ye may trade, and reap, and build;
So hath his clemency permissive willed;
But ye must render me of Jordan's water
A golden urn, and soil from out the field
Where stands your Temple—else prepare for slaughter;
None shall escape the sword, nor sire, nor son, nor daughter!"

XVIII.

Then rises Methulah, down from whose neck
Fall the white locks in curls, a foaming sea,
And whose beard's silvery cascades showery break
Over his purple ephod to his knee,
And thus harangues the conclave solemnly:
"Death is a demon to the trembling ghost,
But to the brave an angel sent to free
The soldier from the dangers of his post,
The forlorn hope of life girt, by an ambushed host."

XIX.

"To die is easy as to have been born!
No greater pain 't will be to draw our last
Gasp, than the first breath of our infant morn;
And what joy brought the present or the past
Like that which to us will the future cast
From out the hours in Fate's all-ruling hand,
When Time shall blow his farewell trumpet blast,
Skies melt away in smoke, and seas, and land,
And all before the cited Judgment Seat shall stand."

XX.

"Are ye afraid to die? Ye then are dead
Already! and to live in constant fear
Is to be always dying! What ye dread
Is what all passions hold despised or dear;
What, when defied, will but a shade appear;
A phantom for revenge that thirsts for blood,
For honor, love, and grief, to chase in air,
That vanishes to nothing when pursued,
And will not kiss the lips when 'tis with ardor wooed."

XXI.

"Ye dread the savage multitudes that may
Be brought against you. Let their numbers be
Thick as the rolling waves in Joppa's Bay,
Or finny shoals that continent the sea;
That army 's always beaten shamefully
In whose ranks enters first blue-lipped dismay;
And valor's crowning meed is victory,
That sneaks not from the battle's dire array,
But on his sword relies, and cuts through foes his way."

XXII.

"The brave disdain to live, unless they breathe
The air of freedom; they are never slaves:
If perils threaten, they will stare at death,
And blanch not to behold their open graves,
But still will rush where freedom's banner waves.
Think ye your cause is then so desperate,
That ye should fear these execrable knaves?
Ye dare not manhood thus emasculate,
But will, defiant, answer back their haughty threat."

XXIII.

"Your fathers fought against imperial Rome,
Your mothers, when in want of other food,
Rather than render up their wedded home,
Devoured their children, their own flesh and blood;
And where ye stand, there they, undaunted, stood.
Here is Jehovah's sanctuary, your trust!
And shall it be polluted by this brood
Of foul hyenas? Thou, O God, art just!
Who will not guard thy shrine, let the wretch bite the dust!"

XXIV.

He ended, scowling, but foreboding gloom
Weighed on his anxious breast! so the palm bends
Her branches pensile when the storm is come;
So with its throbbing fires the cloud contends,
Till the fused lightning its combustion spends.
But now the President his speech begins:
"The fate of Zion on this day depends,
For on this day the crown of saints she wins,
Or felon's cross will gain for her backsliding sins."

XXV.

"If now we quail, in generous courage faint,
We must prepare our naked backs for blows,
All noble sentiments hold in restraint,
All manly feeling that resentment knows,
And learn the coward's cringing and his bows;
Learn how to tremble at an angry frown,
Learn how to flatter our detested foes,
How in the dust to crouch prostrated down,
And lick the foot of every churlish fool and clown."

XXVI.

"It is the craven heart and puny soul,
Afraid of every enterprise, that is
A helot ever: it acts its paltry roll,
And nothing feels of the ennobling bliss
Of aspirations after destinies
More glorious than to live. O Liberty!
The honest patriot's apotheosis!
Intelligential sun, that lights the sky,
In whose disk shadows turn power, pomp, and pageantry,"

XXVII.

"Art thou eclipsed in Israel, but to shine
As a pale meteor in a land of dreams,
Or only live in poet's song divine,
Chanting thy praise sublime in lofty themes?
No; if thou seem'st consuming in the beams
Of thine own pyre, yet, like the Phœnix, thou
Wilt spring aloft from out thy funeral gleams,
And glad the people's hearts, and in strength grow
While empires fall away in dissolution's throe."

XXVIII.

"Your fathers lived beneath these roofs around,
And worshipped at these altars: will ye shame
Your lineage, and let them, leveled to the ground,
Be soiled by heathen conquerors, who claim
Honors divine, and scout Adonai's name?
Fear ye not then the ire of God on high?
Shrink ye not to disgrace your household fame?
Is it from furious men alone ye'll fly?
Ah no: Gibeon would fight, in such a cause would die!"

XXIX.

He frounced his brow, and from his scornful eye
Shot wrath indignant, and disdain and pride,
When silence followed, waiting a reply.
At length Adoram ventured, who had dyed
His lips in Helicon and Siloa's tide:
"The watchful eye of Providence ne'er sleeps,
Although the sun behind a cloud may hide;
The bulrush trembles when the south wind sweeps,
But Israel's heart faints not, but steady pulses keeps."

XXX.

"'Tis a hard lesson to learn how to die!
But there's a task still harder: 'tis to live
Contented, and surrender dignity,
And honor, reputation, fame survive,
And on the blows of bondage fat and thrive.
Gog stretches forth his hand across the globe
To clutch its mace imperial, and would drive
Nations as sheep to slaughter, and them rob
Of that dear liberty for which their yearnings throb."

XXXI.

"But more he strives to gain, more he'll excite
Celestial Nemesis; higher he would fly,
The lower he'll be flung to shades of night
By an inexorable destiny,
That hurls to hell who seeks to mount the sky
Through crimes enormous. Despot though he be,
Commanding millions who for him would die,
Yet, at the price of his own misery,
That tyrant buys his liberty who would enslave the free."

XXXII.

"In form he is a fury, or a devil,
By servile mutes and lying eunuchs spoiled,
Baptised with curses by the imp of evil;
They say that he was born a spleenish child,
And never on his care-worn mother smiled,
Who died of grief; but in his cradle lay,
Still as the tiger crouches in the wild
Jungle, couchant e'er springing on his prey;
The babe's caress would fright the nurse with dire dismay."

XXXIII.

"His sword shall wither to a rotten staff,
A broken reed his sceptre, and a shade
His pageant throne; around his cenotaph
Shall antics dance the morris of the dead,
Foul gibbering fetches twine his crownless head
With knotted chaplets of the Worm of Death,
And the chameleon on his trappings tread;

Impatient fiends shall watch his parting breath,
And snatch his forfeit, soul to burning wrath beneath."

XXXIV.

"Hence let us sternly each the other pledge
Never to yield, but, trusting to our right,
Confront, determined, on the battle's edge
These infidels, whatever be their might,
And perish struggling in the storm of fight.
This vaunting slave your manhood must despise,
This tyrant never must the soul affright
That's true and loyal, and on God relies,
In whose hands are our lives, and Zion's destinies."

XXXV.

The envoys were dismissed, and back returned
To where ascend Byzantium's towers, become
Gog's grand metropolis, in whose brain burned
Exasperate the aconite of doom.
"El Kouds[1] shall be a funeral pyre and tomb!"
Exclaimed the Marut. "Let the levies raised
Here congregate beneath Sophia's dome,
Where the Jews may my standard view amazed,
Where Christ and Allah have been, but Budda now is praised."

XXXVI.

"There it is flaunting, Death on his pale horse,
Type of the spoil and ruin I intend,
And emblem of my desolating course;
For I will to my rule all nations bend,

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[1] The Arabic name for Jerusalem.

Or swarms of ghosts to Dura's furnace send;
Where fiends wait them, and the fires prepare,
Where, though still burning, still shall never end
Their torments, for the scorching blasts of air,
And flaming rollers stings no drug can physic bear."

XXXVII.

'Twas now when Goddesses together meet
On mountain tops, escorted by their train
Of smiling Graces, and of Pleasures sweet,
Emergent from a sunny cloud of rain,
To pass in state along the primrose plain;
And led by cloven-footed Pan, who plays
His syrinx to salute the bladed grain,
Satyrs and Dryads dance in wanton maze,
And hurl their sylvan spells till daffodillies blaze.

XXXVIII.

When Eden zephyrs, whose delicious breath
Revives the tender loves of early day,
Blab where the violets hide, and the gorze heath
Is counterpaned with cloth of golden ray;
When marigolds to Mary seem to pray,
And peeps round mossy roots of velvet bloom
The vinca with the blue eyes of a fay;
And a chance butterfly flits in our room,
Perhaps some Psyche blest come back to visit home.

XXXIX.

And soon arrived the troops that had been called:
From arctic ice-floes came the Tungusees,
Clad in bear skins and furs, whose face appalled

With weirdness sinister, and Kergusees,
With flattened nose, and beady eyes like peas;
The squat Mantchow, the beardless Calmuck's horde,
From Ischim steppes away to Corean seas,
Iran's fleet horse, Zipangi's feudal lord,
And Siam's yellow brood, and Pegu's race abhorred;

XL.

Malays from spicy isles, the wandering tribes
Of Beelochistan, Balk, and Tien-Shan,
Imaums and pachas, muftis, kadis, scribes,
From Abyssinia to Affghanistan,
And dusky Moors from Fez and the Soudan,
Proud janissaries, and prætorian bands,
In lamb's wool coifed, and plushed in silk caftan,
Skilled to hurl javelins with unerring hands,
And toss the swift djereed, lissome as jugglers' wands.

XLI.

The infantry, the ambulance, and train
Of baggage are embarked, and steam along
The Hellespont, until the shore they gain
Immortalized in dreams of epic song,
That chanted Priam's death, and Helen's wrong;
Where sunny bays lie smiling in the sand,
And hundred-footed Ida clouds among,
The lonely Genius of the classic strand,
Talks with departed gods and heroes of the land

XLII.

Hence this contingent, under the command
Of the vizier, by fire-cars were conveyed
To Sardis, for now iron girders spanned

Where once flowed golden waves; and there they made
A flying camp, beneath the plane tree's shade:
Meanwhile the king, with the remaining forces,
The mounted troops, that could through rivers wade,
Had crossed to Scutari, with all the horses,
Camels, mules, and asses, and reached the Typhon's sources,

XLIII.

Near to where Baal-bek, restored again
To pristine opulence, with splendor shone,
Where was rebuilt the Syrian sun-god's fane,
But late become Jehovah's shrine and stone,
A sumptuous sanctuary of pillared stone;
The boundary of what was now the realm
Of Heber's sons, whence they had sudden gone;
Too well assured the devastating flame
To shard heaps would this outpost of their sceptre whelm.

XLIV.

A hundred years before, among its mounds
The jackalls scraped their holes, and nightly prowled,
And swift gazelles by day scoured o'er its grounds;
Amid its vaulted crypts hyenas growled,
Bats and screech-owls its quoins and friezes foulde,
And robber Druses their mud hovels made
'Gainst sculptured basements, and on strangers scowled;
But now it was again a mart of trade,
And temples multiform and palaces displayed.

XLV.

A strong detachment here Gog left behind,
Mount Lebanon to watch, and hold the town;
Then pushed on rapidly, that he might bind
Es Sham[1] in chains, its towers tumble down,
And mosques defile, which minarets no more crown,
Now cupola-capped synagogues; but found
The Jews had from his threatened vengeance flown;
And when throughout the streets his Cossacks wound,
They only heard the clank of their horse-hoofs to sound.

XLVI.

The caliph city had become the prey
Of spoilers worse than wolves, the Phœnix sprung
So often from the dust to light of day,
Earth's ancient borough, which was only young
At Hebron's birth, when Abram praises sung
To a God alien in a lisping song,
And infant Babel her rude cithern strung
Mid clumps of palms her willow banks along,
And of primeval tribes Mizraim alone was strong—

XLVII.

Damascus, long renowned for lush delights,
For gurgling runnels, and for pleasant groves,
And cafés hung at night with colored lights,
Mid gardens where the bulbuls sing their loves
In psalms so holy not a zephyr moves
The golden pollen from the citron's flowers;
Where pulsate with the cooing of the doves

1 The Arabic name for Damascus.

Man's thoughts voluptuous, and love overpowers
The yielding heart, bewitched by the soft twilight hours:

XLVIII.

Where hum of bees the buzzing woodland swarms,
  Where in the blaze of the baked window-sill
The salamander sleeps, and on his shawms
  The eldritch beetle hails the evening still;
  Where on the Pharphar's dock and fennel frill
The glow-worm Hero lights her bridal lamp,
  To guide her own Leander from the hill;
On dog-rose heath where crickets trench their camp,
And rattle their castanets the frogs in meadows damp.

XLIX.

In this abandoned town the khan awaits
  The approach of his lieutenant, who his way
Had expedited, till within the gates
  Of Syria's capital, past many a bay
  And promontory, whence he might survey,
In the far distance, Cyprus, as a haze
  Welded of sea and sky in a clear day;
And nearer, on idyllic glens might gaze,
On Taurus' turbaned brow of oaks and pines and bays.

L.

A sentinel towards the desert stands
  Aleppo, with its lime and lemon woods,
Beleaguered by an enemy of sands,
  Sombre and melancholy solitudes,
  Where life contends with death in ceaseless feuds;
Yet patches of tobacco and corn gem

With amber verdure its close neighborhoods,
And snowy cotton fields the borders hem
Of the brown waste that's bronzed by the sirocco's flame.

LI.

Now through a russet heath, now florid vale,
Past the Orontes rattles on the train,
Fire-harnessed, thundering o'er the iron rail,
In net vulcanic woven, till they gain
Where streams meandering irrigate the plain,
And green what else would be a wilderness,
Teeming with summer fruits and golden grain;
And here they join Gog's squadron's numberless,
That bivouac in this elysian loveliness.

LII.

The grace of sylvan cloisters, lilies string,
On rosaries each hour a snow white bell,
And with their voice of perfume matins sing,
And like pale nuns their beads with unction tell;
While watching graves sits green, cold asphodel,
The ghost of flowers; hands folded as in prayer,
Prays the wood-sorrel, hermit of the dell;
And, messengers of life, the swallows bear—
True birds of Paradise, tidings of summer air.

THE ENCAMPMENT.

CANTO III.

I.

THE rails had been torn off, the culverts broken,
Bridges blown up, towards Jerusalem;
So for a hansel, and vindictive token
Of ills to come, to the devouring flame
The city was consigned, that hence its name
Might perish from the earth; and centuries after,
When to the blackened ruin pilgrims came,
They heard no sound of revelry or laughter,
But sorrel, blanched and sere, sighed from the mouldering rafter;

II.

And from the rushes in its reeky fens
Stalked the malaria forth as from its grave
Steals silently the ghost; and from their dens
The lions howled where withered brackens wave
O'er fallen columns; and the whirlwinds rave
To waterspouts that call from deep to deep;
And lords of moss-grown aisle and crumbling nave
Of rifled tombs and temples, lizards creep
Where pomp and beauty blazed, but now in ashes sleep.

III.

From what had late been luxury's delight,
Now a scarred carcass, on their way proceed
The Terror towards Zion; so alight
A plague of locusts on an April mead,
Destroying with a pestilential greed
The milky spears of wheat with bearded glume;
So on the hills of Judah ravenous spread
The caterpillar's legions, and consume
The vines and melon beds, and summer's ripening bloom.

IV.

Where'er they marched, through wood of pine or oak,
O'er grassy champaign, or through flowery dell,
Their footsteps might be tracked by clouds of smoke,
By lurid flames or smouldering fires of hell,
The carse so ravined none there hence could dwell.
They cross the Jordan's tide below the lake
Of Merom, at a ford their guides knew well;
And then the road to Capernaum take,
Where Christ the servant healed for his good master's sake.

V.

Where he, the glory and the shame of men,
Along the dunes with stars his vigils passed,
While couched the coney in his tunnelled den,
And callow broods were laid in slumber fast
In their warm nests; him smote the midnight blast,
As wearied with uninterrupted tread
That lonely beach he paced, by grief o'ercast:

Beast to his lair had crept, bird to his bed,
The Son of Man had not where he could lay his head.

VI.

They coursed by Magdala, famous by the faith
Of a sick woman's love, in sorrow strong,
The first who heard alive the voice of death
Beatified; Tiberias along
That sea, on which have human feet among
Its crested billows walked, as on firm ground;
And holy Nazareth, where angel's song
Hailed Mary, full of grace, on earth renowned,
In Heaven exalted, for thou hast Heaven's favor found.

VII.

O mystery! beyond the depth of thought!
Beyond the sense of wisdom's blinded eyne!
With wondrous meaning to all ages fraught!
Although no consort to a spouse divine,
What honor can beside thy glory shine?
For if in human flesh a God e'er dwelt,
'Twas in thy dear son's charity benign:
The bleeding heart to thee and him hath knelt,
And for that prayer stronger, better, purer felt.

VIII.

How different was thine errand here, O king
Of carnage and of death! Not to salute
Faith, the mother of Peace, and his birth sing,
As Bethlehem's minstrels, with the harp and lute,
Greeting good-will to men; but as a brute
In whom had Satan entered, didst thou come,

Begrimed with every hellish attribute,
Denouncing war's exterminating doom,
And ready to convert the earth into a tomb.

IX.

Thence thou didst move on Shunem, to attain
The craggy defiles, sheltered by a wood,
And soon the cover of the thickets gain,
Where erst the Philistine encampment stood,
Before the field that flowed a lake of blood;
And there thine army draw up, line on line,
In martial order, a dense multitude,
Innumerable amidst the scraggy pine,
That thick with glimmering spears and glancing bayonets shine.

X.

Meanwhile, had Israel's ruler missives sent
By lightning couriers, to request the aid
Promised by Britain, who a settlement
Had formed in Egypt, and its peoples swayed,
And to whom all willing obedience paid,
Copt; Nubian, Negro, Berber, Frank, and Moor;
Who on the banks of Nile had firmly laid
The strong foundations of her Indian power,
Her empire stretching thence to Ceylon and Lahore.

XI.

An army vast of centaur Mamelukes
And Spahis she had raised, and black Sepoys;
The Saxon cool was there, and Celt, who brooks
Impatient the curbed bridle, but enjoys
The sport of battle with its din and noise;

More rash than steady, volatile than sage;
The gold of courage, who with dross alloys
Of quarrels vain; the hero of the stage,
Irrepressible whether love or war he wage.

XII.

These levies were under the sole command
Of gray-haired Alpin placed, a veteran
Who had for years with wisdom ruled the land,
Sagacious in the field or the divan;
No ballet fop, no dwarfling of a man,
No puppet with an ancient pedigree,
Tricked in old threadbare raiment; shrewd to plan,
And prompt to execute, and just was he;
Gentle yet firm, and kind in his severity.

XIII.

Loved by his soldiers, cherished by his king,
And self-respected by his own proud soul,
He was no wittol courtier, fluttering
In state levees, dizened in Momus's stole,
With a fool's-cap and feathers on his poll,
Grinning for favors; but on his own head
Alone relied to help him to the goal
He had attained, and where that mentor led
He never feared, with sword in hand, that way to tread.

XIV.

On board of transports were these troops dispatched,
In the bright honey-zephyred month of May,
When cottage roofs with netted vines are thatched,

And with sweet woodbines' coral bugles gay,
Or the wisteria's cerulean spray.
They safely anchored in the open port,
Where the sea-dragon held the nymph at bay,
Till her deliverer with the monster fought;
Late of immigrants, now of soldiers the resort.

XV.

Within the town are narrow, tortuous streets,
Training the smell of noisome sewerage;
Yet here and there a doddered tower greets
The stroller, remnants of a former age,
Fit contemplation for the musing sage;
For there are epics writ on each cut stone,
Let into shapeless walls at every stage,
Torn from a triglyph or a propyleon,
Where lonely ruins mark Cæsarea's glory gone.

XVI.

And many more auxiliars had arrived:
Greeks from artistic Hellas; from Trieste
Hungarians, who their Teuton bonds had rived,
And formed an independent kingdom, blest
With peace and union, and were grandly drest
In gilded uniforms, with slash and braid,
Fierce as a winged gryphon's flaming crest;
Germania's sturdy sons had been conveyed;
Muscovite and Pole, the red-haired Dane, and blue-eyed Swede.

XVII.

Hither had also mustered martial Gauls,
Mercurial, and inconstant, and yet brave,

Who follow Glory's voice where'er she calls;
And now the ensign of the Lark [1] they wave,
Trolling a trouvère ballad to the grave:
Ausonia's noble race, regenerated,
No more to foreign tyranny a slave,
But by their bloody baptism renovated,
Had for their holy faith a brigade here translated.

XVIII.

And Celtiberian gallantry had sent,
In honor of the Virgin and her Son,
A patient, hard-enduring armament,
And offered vows to images of stone,
To shield from sacrilege Jehovah's throne;
And from the austral shore, with sands of gold,
And rocks of brass, had men of iron bone,
And thews of steel, in adamantine mould,
Been here dispatched, a small contingent staunch and bold.

XIX.

Beside these, there was yet another band—
A brotherhood of knightly volunteers—
Culled from the youth of Freedom's chosen land,
Whither the orb of mundane empire steers
To blaze in glory through the western spheres;
Who had sworn Zion's altars to protect
From pillage, and avenge her sacred tears?
Or, in the ardent enterprise be wrecked,
Of all the Christian arms the chivalry select.

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(1) The Lark was the standard of the Gaulish contingent whom Julius Cæsar led into Italy.

XX.

These divers nationalities obeyed,
Each its own captain, but the others yielded
Precedence to the English chief, and paid
Him due submission; and he gently wielded,
Yet firmly, the authority, nor builded
An arrogance offensive, nor a vain
Pride of command, the player's staff that's gilded,
And not a marshall's truncheon, that with pain,
Deep thought, and anxious care, can only soldiers gain.

XXI.

Night wraps her mantle round the shivering stars,
While spring-wort's candles light the elves to sleep;
Alike the hum of peace, and roar of Mars
Nod in life-aping dreams. Now from the deep
Cave of the past long buried memories leap
Reanimated from the dust, and greet
The overburdened heart till it must weep!
With friends deceased again the living meet,
And tread their mile-stone road of life with backward feet.

XXII.

The season of the rainbow-tinctured flowers,
Daughters of sunshine and the dew of night,
Had gone to seed, when through the garden bowers,
Besprent with haze of leucothean light,
While yet the stars the face of Heaven dight,
Alpin led forth his squadrons through the town,
Past fields of flax and hemp, and hedges bright
With roses, bursting like our hopes, ere blown
By disappointment's blast, they are forever flown.

XXIII.

Skirting the base of Carmel's wooded height,
Near great rocks shadowing the land they pass,
Then on the banks of Kishon's stream alight,
Where lambs were frisking on the tender grass,
And the larks carolling over them, alas!
Their epithalamium, of many there
The threnody, as litany at mass,
Or vespers sweet, or swinging in the air
From Heaven's threshold bells that call the blest to prayer.

XXIV.

Kishon, that ancient river, where the stars
Fought in their courses against Sisera,
When there arose to rule the tribal wars
A mother, prophetess and conqueror,
In Israel, wiser than her captains were;
When Jael, who her country's sorrows wept,
Softly to where reposed the warrior,
Her nation's scourge, with nail and mallet crept,
And drove the sharp death in his temple as he slept.

XXV.

Near to the clachan of Megiddo was
Encamped the Hebrew army in their tents,
Hard by the mazard of a rocky pass,
By forts protected and strong armaments;
And there his quarters on the steep ascents
Alpin arrayed: and now down to the fall
Of the spring-flood from mountain rifts and rents,
Were heard the drum's tattoo, and bugle's call,
And bale fires seen to burn on every pinnacle.

XXVI.

A million soldiers were drawn up to fight
For Jewry in the plain of Armageddon
Against three millions on the opposite height,
By Gog, the Anti-Christ blasphemer, led on,
The dread Avatar of the fierce Abaddon,
The Emperor of the shades of death below,
Whose rage transfused in him and hatred gad on
The wretch in his career of bloody woe,
As a bull mad with stings when flies upon him blow.

XXVII.

They had been stationed here for several days,
When just as boomed the camp's meridian gun,
The light grew dark to their intense amaze,
As if with sack-cloth on it mourned the sun,
And nature had her funeral pall put on;
The air felt dead, and scarce could creatures breathe,
Scarce could the beasts stir in the thickets dun,
To his hole slunk the snake for fear of death,
And ravens ceased to fly, but floated o'er the heath.

XXVIII.

A calm ensued, so still, ne'er was a storm
More terrible, strange fear seized fainting men—
No wonder! for in Heaven appeared a form,
Meek as a paschal lamb led to be slain,
That to the right hand of the Throne where reign
All Power and Love stepped, and the Book of Fate
Took from his Father's hand, and loosed the chain,
And broke the seal, when all the hosts elate
With joy, saluted Him, who there in glory sat;

XXIX.

And there was solemn silence for a space,
That held in trance the glad empyrean.
Then closed the skies; and there was seen to race
A shooting star, that from the groundsill ran
Of Paradise, and in a moment's span
Lit on the top of Tabor's mount, and shone
A lustrous spirit with the face of man,
And blew a trumpet with a piercing tone,
So shrill, it curdled frore the liquid blood to stone

XXX.

In living hearts that heard it. Then great voices,
Intoned in thunder, through the startled air
Exclaimed:—"The kingdom of this world rejoices,
Because that soon along the starry sphere
In clouds of glory will the Lord appear."
And from embattled sabaoth on high,
In various cadence rising, falling, clear,
Responses echoed in the trembling sky,
Rolling through countless orbs in the infinity:—

XXXI.

"We thank Thee that Thou hast resumed Thy reign,
For angry are the nations; but Thy wrath
Will soon begin. Then shall to life again
Rise from the clod, as vernal flowers rathe,
The virtuous dead, and follow on the path
That leads to days eternal; nor disdain
Wilt Thou Thy saints elect, the scattered swath
Mown down by Death's sharp scythe, who suffered pain

And martyrdom, whose robes are washed without a stain."

XXXII.

Again the portals of the azure wide
Unfolded, and displayed the golden Ark
Within the Temple; whence a rushing tide
Of swirling hail and snow drifts burst the dark
Chambers of air, and meteors flash and spark,
Explosive with tempestuous flame and smoke:
Hark to the herald's joyful tidings, hark!
"The power of Sin and Satan shall be broke,
And Death and Hell shall yield to the Messiah's yoke!"

XXXIII.

Lo! a third wonder! Through the welkin flies,
Black as the shadow of Apollyon,
An Angel, casting in the shuddering skies
The Seventh Plague from out a Vial, whence run
Wars, pestilence, and famine, till the sun
Sweats drops of blood in agonizing woes,
And from the Throne a voice calls "It is done!"
Immediately the earth's parturient throes
Ripped its Cyclopean womb till isles sunk and seas rose.

XXXIV.

Quick heaved the ground, as billows of the main,
In undulations of gigantic waves,
That mountains seemed to walk across the plain;
Then cracks in veins, and gaps, and hollow caves,
Of thousand cities the engulfing graves.
Church steeples rock, cathedral towers creak,

And bury with their ruins aisles and naves;
The palaces of kings to fragments break,
And in their sepulchres the dead from sleep awake.

XXXV.

The living quail, and utter piercing screams,
Heart-rending, for they think the day of doom
Is come, and that the lurid crimson beams,
Which through the pitchy clouds with anger loom,
Are lightnings pausing ere their bolts consume;
That Fate was tolling for the death of Time
A funeral knell ere laid in nature's tomb,
And sung his dirge in elegiac rhyme
Of thunder trump and whirlwind harp in storms sublime.

XXXVI.

Sin is the nurse of fear; yet impious Gog
Preserved a steady brow, composed, serene,
Because the Dragon had inspired the dog
With sanguine hopes; and when they saw his mien
Brazed and erect, his trembling subjects ween
Him the Almighty, and the awful signs
His work, which they had with such wonder seen,
Some new invention of his grand designs—
Miracles of his power! "See how his godhead shines!"

XXXVII.

And there were many Christians and Jews both,
Who, though they on the portents looked with dread,
Yet trusted in their cause, and were not loth

To risk the battle's issue; but the head
Of guilt in peace slept not that night in bed,
But by grim apparitions was enthralled;
And if the wind but a low moaning made,
Or shadow passed, they thought that they were called
By some blood-sprinkled ghost, and quaked, and were
appalled.

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON.

CANTO IV.

I.

AROUND their camp the Christian armies raised
Earthworks, embankments, and casemated walls,
And sloping glacis cut where late had grazed
The antelope, but where no longer falls
His frightened hoof, that every noise appals;
And ditches delved with rigid palisade,
Planted with death behind, impervious malls,
And parapets, redoubts, and ramparts made,
And on the walls and rathes long tiers of cannons laid.

II.

At all the stations guards were set to watch
The country round for fear of a surprise;
And oft an aide-de-camp, in quick dispatch,
From van to rear, and from an outpost hies
To where the staff in central quarters lies.
Here on a plateau's spur, there in a dell,
A marshalled squadron 's drilled for exercise;
And in the night the tread of sentinel
Is heard, who challenges the watchword, "All is well."

III.

And often in the stilly air the hum
Of mustering legions breaks the solitude
Of Carmel's oaken summits; and the drum
With doubling echoes startles in the wood
The wild boar crunching acorns for his food;
And oft at set of sun the flaming spears,
And gleaming bayonets of the multitude
Disturb the flocks of geese with panic fears,
And rout their phalanxed wedge as through the cloud
it steers.

IV.

At many a camp-fire then some youth beguiled
The dreary watch by tales of by-gone days,
When, like a mother, Fate had on him smiled,
And Hope had sung him sleep, with syren lays,
To waken up, and at the nightmare gaze:
Her pillared arch of opal in the sky
So Iris builds with dewy light ablaze,
The gate of cloudy palaces on high,
Till thunder storms strike down the specious masonry.

V,

And then douce thoughts of home, to touch soft
hearts,
Would rise, expressed in sympathetic sighs,
Till on the burning eyeball a tear starts,
And some fair girl appears before fond eyes—
Some image hallowed by pure memories!
O! talk of glory to the dead in war!
To the crushed flower of primaveral skies!

Of light and splendor to the fallen star!
But of the love of home speak not where warriors
are!

VI.

Yet sacred melancholy reigns not alone,
The jovial song and merry jest go round;
The Highland bagpipes blow their squealing drone,
And Highland reels beat measure to the sound,
And Irish heels with frisky jigs rebound:
The Celtic blood at danger's all astir,
And where the battle is its joy is found,
A stoic brave, yet gay philosopher,
A mummer dancing blithe above his sepulchre.

VII.

But now the withered ghost of squalid want
Flits through the camp: on desiccated bones,
And moldy bread they fared, with rations scant;
Hence through the spital tents were heard the
groans
Of soldiers sick and dying, and the moans
Of helplessness, and ravings of despair,
Till stalwart men shrunk into skeletons!
And one would curse, another say a prayer,
While what alone was fed was grim and gnawing care.

VIII.

They could not draw supplies from neighboring lands,
For scouts incessant scoured the bridle roads,
To intercept convoys and forage bands:
Marasmus oft a maniac explodes,
And suicides were frequent episodes.

Well did Gog know how famine thinned their hosts,
So he could wait its lenten stings and goads,
That sent them fasting to the feast of ghosts,
While daily forward he pushed on his advanced posts.

IX.

The season, too, was adverse, for a drought
Flayed the land bare; the green-eared corn was struck
By blistering winds, and the charred grain fell out
From the spikes blasted; fruits that could not brook
The sultry noon, were shriveled to a ruck,
Dried by the chymic flame till mummified,
Or from the boughs dropped in a heap of muck;
Frizzled the leafy verdure was and fried,
And trunks of forest trees split to their cores and died.

X.

For days, for weeks, for months, the crimson sun
Rose and it set, the moon waxed and moon waned,
And the stars shone without a cloudlet on
The torrid sky: by day, a window paned
With burnished silver, without blemish stained;
By night, a gray white sheet of steel, inlaid
With diamond spangles; and then stillness reigned
As heavy as an atmosphere of lead,
And the torpedo clime with lightnings stung the head.

XI.

Sometimes a whirlwind would arise, and lift
Columns of dust from off the squamous soil,
And scatter them aloft to whirl and drift

For miles along, in many a spiral coil,
As runs some monster to o'ertake a spoil;
Or the air, sucking moisture from the ground,
Twirled and vibrated in a sparkling pile,
Where seething ponds in scorched ravines abound,
Whence stench of loathing comes from frequent slime-pits round.

XII.

And once there blew, as from an oven's mouth,
A heated kamseen, with his choking breath,
Parched by the sand-storm of the fiery south;
And suddenly a cloud swept o'er the heath—
A pestilence, whose trail was tracked by death—
Of flies, on limber scale or gauzy wing,
Blackening the air above, the ground beneath,
In the dull eve-like midnoon fluttering,
And the swarm buzz, and hum, and hiss, and flap, and sting.

XIII.

There was the tzetse plague, inflicting pain
And botches on whatever flesh they seize,
Till oozed an issue from each punctured blain;
The locust rustling on the furnace breeze;
Bugs, beetles, scorpions, centipedes, and fleas;
And the musquito, night's hobgoblin pest,
The vampire that forbids or sleep or ease,
Bred in the open cesspools that infest
The streets of tropic towns, miasma's putrid nest.

XIV.

The last cicada's song had long expired,
Yet Gog moved not; but just before the rains

Of autumn fall, while panting nature tired
Lay sick of dog-star fevers, through the plains
Down to the rivage, tussock-tanned, his trains
Of heavy ordnance drags, and distant range,
And opens fire with shot and linked chains,
And bombs, and shells, and darts from engines strange,
That, with explosive flame, burn cot, and barn, and grange.

XV.

The brass and iron Ætnas spouting blaze
Cyclopean death, and the swift ruin falls
On bastioned towers and battlements, and raze
The ravelines, curtains, and casemated walls,
Till the dire wreck the stoutest heart appals;
Behind fascines and dykes the Christians keep
For shelter from the storm of red-hot balls;
And in return with their artillery sweep
Long swathes of dead and wounded, and the channels heap

XVI.

With stacks of slain; but the dry shallows ford
Battalions fresh, and reach its southern shore,
Swarm hurtling swarm, and horde encumbering horde,
And on the plain of Armageddon pour,
As the black deluge of a tropic shower;
While grape and canister gash down their ranks,
Midst shouts and curses and the cannon's roar,
And hurl them backwards to the sedgy banks,
And with the hail of fear disperse their broken flanks.

XVII.

But Ryno rallies them repulsed, and they,
Cheered by his voice, back to the mounds attain,
O'er fallen comrades jostling on their way,
And on the parapet a footing gain;
But there the Huns resistance firm maintain,
And Goths and Teutons form their phalanxes,
The hardy Norse, stout Belge, and lusty Dane,
A bulwark of their bodies to redress
The cause of Christendom, menaced with sore distress.

XVIII.

Now pipes are yelling, and the clarions bloring,
Horses snorting, sabres and kriesses clashing,
As ranks impetuous in the onset pouring,
With claymores gleaming, and with falchions flashing,
In the main shock of battle fierce are dashing;
With rigid sinews stretched upon the strain,
And vice-held grip of bayonet squares are crashing
The Cossack cavalry, that form again,
And rush as runs a fire through autumn's stubble plain.

XIX.

Now spears with hostile lances interweave,
And yataghans with scimeters contend;
Halberds and battle-axes helmets cleave,
And the chained hauberk pikes and arrows rend,
And flocks of souls to hell or heaven send;
Nearer in tug of war conflicting meet,
And in each blow the rage of fiends spend,

With tightened arm, teeth set, and stiffened feet,
And with their weapons' clatter death or victory greet.

XX.

But louder than the tumult, Honor's voice
Bids the hereditary valor rise
Of Israel, and their just revenge rejoice,
In yells reverberating to the skies
Their anathema maranatha cries;
Upon the pressing enemy they dart,
Till rage incarnadines their blood-shot eyes,
Like hydrophobic hounds, and where dispart
The hostile ranks stab every foeman to the heart.

XXI.

Just then a corps of Tchakar horsemen rushed,
With scrannel furies leading their advance,
And closing on the lines of Judah, crushed
The gallant warriors with the spear and lance,
Draggled to dust but for the troops of France:
Then fell their brave commander by the side
Of his own ensign's tattered cognizance,
A lion gules, rampant in shaggy pride
Of forest freedom, and a vine with clusters dyed.

XXII.

Adoram, too, was wounded as he fought
His captain to revenge, his friend and kin;
But dearly this success the Tchakars bought,
For now the flower of chivalry pour in
With bugle's bray and pibroch's screeching din;
And charge the brigade that in panic flies,

And from them the imperial standard win;
Then oped the embrasures of the batteries
Their mouths of rattlesnakes and hydra-headed eyes.

XXIII.

Sad implement of infinitude of woe,
Infernal engine; yet intelligent
As is the soldier laid by thy fire low;
Sometimes as gay as now belligerent,
When to announce some festival thou'rt sent,
Then children clap their hands with thoughtless glee:
But when thy thunder shakes the battlement,
Nations bewail thy mock of misery;
Thy voice the roar of mirth or howl of agony!

XXIV.

Pleased was the gray-haired chieftain, and thus spoke:
"That mounted phalanx, in its foremost lines,
Is by the encounter of our forces broke,
And back recoils from where the battle joins,
And fate auspicious to our arms inclines.
Their ranks disordered utterly I see;
Now fire the mortars, and now spring the mines;
One struggle more, and Jewry shall be free,
We fight for God and Christ, our faith and liberty!"

XXV.

"Breathe martial spirit in the valorous fife,
And bid the rattling drum hot ardor sound,
And, rushing fearless to the field of strife,
Let us the pride and power of Gog confound,
And dash his pomp vain glorious to the ground!"

From flutes and pipes the screaming challenge floats,
With throbbing resolution hearts rebound,
And answer back defiance from their throats,
While vengeance wild exults from cornet's blatant notes.

XXVI.

Instant there flew the fury of dragoons,
And curassiers, and lancers, and huzzars,
Through dusty knolls of bent and dried lagoons,
And over carcasses with ancient scars
And recent wounds deformed, victims of war's
Barbaric monster, and the straggling rear
Retreating close pursued. But now the stars,
Glimmering through smoke, as fluttering ghosts appear
Of heroes slain, but where unmuffled twinkle clear,

XXVII.

And o'er the field a dome of glory spread,
A Heaven over Hell. In peace arise
The constellations over Gilboa's head,
The influence of the Pleiad's mysteries,
The key-stone of the arch of stellar skies,
Orion's swathing bands, and sword, and belt,
Aldebaran flaming in the Bull's red eyes:
O who hath not the solemn grandeur felt,
When peep their orbs through dusk, and when in dawn they melt,

XXVIII.

And their dumb tongues speak to the awe-struck soul!
O what is mundane power but vanity,
A gilded bauble for the empty fool,

In presence of those altar-fires on high,
That light the shrines of dread infinity?
There worlds inhabit space as men this earth,
Yet cannot plenish the immensity,
Where systems upon systems fail to girth
The universe of God, who still gives being birth!

XXIX.

On Heaven's watch-tower hill his station takes
The Sentinel of Morn in mantle gray;
And as the earth to consciousness awakes,
The winking stars grow drowsy in the day;
When suddenly the feathered clouds display
In climes cerulean flecks of rosy down,
The wings of angel hosts, bent on their way
To Paradise, their nightly mission done
To watch this world, now called before Jehovahs' Throne.

XXX.

The glory of his beauty is attained,
Yet the diurnal luminary is concealed
Behind cleft Pisgah's peak, when softly waned
The rich phantasmagoria unannealed,
And from the encroaching golden splendor reeled:
Some fitful rays burst from the craggy ledge,
And the prismatic tints in silver sealed,
When lo! the sun's disk from the mountain's edge
Lifted its flood Promethean, still of life the pledge;

XXXI.

But pledge of ruin too, and doom, and death!
O who can see at morn the set of day!
This moment is our own while we still breathe,

The next is God's when he calls us away;
Life's birth is the beginning of decay;
The cradle rocking moves toward the tomb,
But love and truth to Heaven will find their way;
Though 'tis to wither that the roses bloom,
Yet their dried leaves, when dead, retain their first perfume.

XXXII.

Then from his couch of ebony, inlaid
With tortoise-shell and nacrine, Gog arose,
And with brocaded gaudery arrayed
His person, sparkling cap-à-pie with rows
Of gems profuse, with aiguilettes and bows
Festooned, and freaked with medals: proud he wore
A Phœnix-plumed tiara, on his brows
Pressing with weight, but care then pressed them more,
And powdered were his beard's elf-knots with a gold shower.

XXXIII.

Sun-dewed with musk and amber, forth he went
Out of his chamber like a young bridegroom,
And o'er the assembled troops sardonic bent
A look of scrutiny and gorgon gloom;
When Ryno interposed, humbly to assume
The monitor:—"O let me thee beseech
To doff this gaudy dress and aigrette plume,
My lord and master, or thy foes thou'lt teach
How they with deadly missiles may thy person reach."

XXXIV.

"My life's the Sphinx of Fate. No weapon can
Pierce my flesh steeled in tempered fires of Hell;

I fear the prowess of no mortal man,
As my deeds terrible this day shall tell,
For I the rage of mighty imps can quell:
I'll pass through flame, it will not hurt a hair,
And waters round to buoy me up will swell,
A talisman oraculous I wear,
An amulet to sheath me in the viewless air."

XXXV.

"My mother bore me, virgin pure and fair,
By Budah's fecundating breath impregned,
And left me to an Afrit's fostering care,
And a Deeve was my brother, and my friend."
So spake the pride presumptuous of the fiend,
And on a black war-steed, with housings bright
With jewelled ouches, mounted while cheers rend
The sky vociferous, such the delight
To see their hero-god in doughty armour dight.

XXXVI.

He rode along the lines, and thus addressed
The drawn-up ranks procinct:—"My banner's lost,
And must recovered be, however pressed.
If this day ye should flinch or yield a post,
I'll without mercy decimate your host:
Repair my honor, and my flag retake,
Or ye shall find I've made no idle boast!
Now with the spark of Lucifer awake
These roaring Titans and those dogs to Orcus rake;"

XXXVII.

"And under cover of the flame I'll lead
The vanguard on." Like rolling clouds that move

With floods ædematous, marshalled overhead
In cataracts and waterspouts by Jove,
Who scatters round the branches of the grove,
The infuriate columns to the trenches rushed,
And zouaves, grenadiers, and chasseurs drove
Before their catapultic charge, and crushed
Quadrates in trodden mass, behind the barriers pushed.

XXXVIII.

A million Mongols entered in the walls,
As shells in fire-tornadoes screaming flew;
And garbed in garniture of carnivals,
The Malays followed, a fantastic crew;
And soon the million duplicated grew:
A wholesale butchery of life ensued;
For when their captured flag the pagans view,
Through lanes of bristling bayonets spring the brood
Outrageous, and the banner snatch besmirched with blood.

XXXIX.

The clouds are bronzed with thunder; shapes appear
Without a form, and move without a sound,
And in the dark smoke voluble ensphere
Their terrors, till the culverins rebound,
When in the flash they dart along the ground,
As fiery snakes. The devils are let loose.
For 'tis Hell's sabbat: to kill, maim, and wound
Is pastime pleasant for the Lilith crews,
And shrieks, and groans, and death their spiteful rage amuse.

XL.

Still on the glacis and the ramparts raged
The stubborn conflict; fierce the cannonade
On both sides, where the hustling hosts engaged;
The Mantchous trample down the palisade,
The leaguered wall the Calmucks escalade;
Confronted squadrons yield not nor retreat;
No thought of fear or death, but, undismayed,
They fight, wherever Christians Budhists meet,
Hand against hand uplifted, feet to hostile feet.

XLI.

No quarter then was given on either side;
Men died, and sought not honor to survive;
Nor hung in long suspense the battle's tide,
For still an indefatigable hive
Of clans came on, who every sinew strive
To catch their leader's eye, and earn his praise;
For there the king was; and around him live
Few that oppose him: he a legion slays
With his sole arm, to his foes' and his friends' amaze.

XLII.

Nor can a weapon touch him, nor a ball;
A thousand rifles at his crest are aimed
In vain; from off his dress impenetrable fall
The rattling bullets; and unscathed, unmaimed,
He runs a muck, blood-maddened and inflamed
To rancor pitiless; and a massacre
Orders, that wars of cannibals outshamed;

Nothing is spared—slaughtered without demur
Were combatants; and scalped and flayed the wounded were.

XLIII.

Alpin was killed; and as the brave man died,
He thanked his God he would not live to see
The hypertrophy of the heathen's vaunting pride,
Nor Christians' undeserved catastrophe,
But joined the patriots of Thermopylæ.
Next day, a party sent the spoils to rake
On the Aceldama, under a tree
Adoram found still living, and him take
Captive, the only prisoner spared for mercy's sake.

XLIV.

The rest to cannons' mouths were lashed, and blown
To scraps and atoms, till the fields were black
With spattered flesh, brains, bowels, and shattered bone—
The Hindoo's grave! Along the sulphurous rack
Of minute guns the screaming vultures track
The smell of booty, snatching in their chase
At flying collops; nor fat offal lack
The glutton boars that down from Carmel race,
To strip with flaying tusk in shreds the human face.

XLV.

"Now build a trophy of this victory
To everlasting time. Great Belus raised
A storied tower, aspiring to the sky,
That, looking on the pile, with envy amazed,
The speech confounded of its masons, dazed

With babbling tumult. Such a lofty mound
I will construct, but not with gold emblazed,
With brick cemented, or with marble bound.
But with blood-plastered skulls in layers from the ground."

XLVI.

"Such in his noble fury Timour made,
A monument of wrath and kingly pride,
The grandest mausoleum for the dead,
Sublimer far than Cheop's pyramid."
So ordered the grim despot. Terrified,
The troops obeyed, and with assiduous zeal,
Uninterrupted, to the labor plied,
Submiss. In basket or in creel,
In barrows and in carts the horrid loads they wheel;

XLVII.

And lay the rows in lengthened lines aplumb,
In slanting stairs heaped up, and outward turn,
In cynic mockery of their awful doom,
The mangled visages, haggard and dern,
Stolid or placid, grave or frowning stern;
Their eyeballs glisten, although fixed in death,
And seem with rage perdurable to burn;
Their clotted locks the tomb of reason wreath,
The lips still smile or scowl, and want but only breath.

XLVIII.

And there it stood, ascending to the clouds,
The apotheosis man most reveres!
War's hatchment and escutcheon, gaped by crowds!
And vultures perch upon the deathful tiers,

And haul the heads from out their ghastly biers;
There wend the matin crow, and famished kite,
And there the eagle from Mount Horeb steers;
Thither the tempests in their anger light,
And demons sport and howl in the unhallowed night.

XLIX.

A meteor rising out of blood is war,
Alluring phantoms round that shriek and rave,
And curse the light of its delusive star!
Murder one man—thou art a felon knave!
A thousand kill—thou art a warrior brave!
Yet photograph the feathered hero, thou
Wilt draw the hired assassin or the slave,
With the red spot of Cain upon his brow,
To hell congenial friend, to earth her deadliest foe.

L.

But they who for their freedom bravely fight,
Their hearths and altars, are by Heaven beloved,
Although they may be traitors in the sight
Of heir-loom kings: elected saints approved,
Them death exalts to glory who are moved
By noble manhood, and dishonored feel
To live despised, who sternly are reproved
By conscience, if they shirk the public weal,
And fear their country's cause with their own blood to seal.

LI.

Is life but pain, and man a living curse,
Since he plucked knowledge from the fatal grove?
Shall arrogance and wrong be honor's nurse?

The laws of Nature are the arms of Love!
Behind the March-rack shines the sun above,
Through April showers peep the Twins of May;
To Noah's ark through briny waste the dove
Brought from the budding glebe the olive spray;
So shall the chrism of sorrow shrive all sin away.

RESURRECTION OF THE SAINTS.

CANTO V.

I.

IN the abyss of midnight sudden glows
A full blown burst of radiance, as if there
The orient day-spring premature had rose
From out his curtained couch of damask air,
So vivid was the instantaneous glare:
The birds forsook their nests and warbled forth
Their matin orisons, while to his lair
The panther skulked, and in the caverned earth
The shaphans burrowed, thinking it a new day's birth.

II.

Past where the clouds rifts burn with scarlet flecks,
Their lighted watch-towers, in the horizon lost
Through palpitating haze, as golden specks
Flicker in silver-gray the angel host,
Now as a rain of gems or flowers tost,
Then nearer, with a whirlwind's rush of plumes,
They flood with rainbow waves the azure coast;
The iridiscent sky with beauty fumes,
And with the innumerable flap of pennons hums.

III.

Then opened wide the Heavens, and, on a throne
Of bickering flame within a sea of fire
Sat the Omnipotent, and round Him shone
Light as His garment, spreading to attire
His presence with infolding wreath and spire
Of luminous clouds that blaze along the sky;
Glories stream from Him, and a watchful choir
Of cherubim before Him stand, and cry,
"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord our God on high!"

IV.

'Twas He who through eternity is called
"Ancient of Days," who lived before was time,
Whose bright effulgence cannot unappalled
Spirits behold, but from the sight sublime
Look down abashed, as shrinks from virtue crime:
Ten thousand thrones are placed, and on his throne.
Each hierarch is seated, mid a chime
Of halleluiahs in mellifluous tone,
And at their head is seen the Virgin Mother's Son.

V.

Then spake the omnific Father, "Son of Mine
Own bosom, rule thou, and thine enemies
I'll make thy footstool, for My power is thine!
Grace is on thy lips, and love in thine eyes,
And in thy heart compassion's sympathies;
Truth, Justice, Peace, and Mercy have caressed
Each other at thy shrine of sacrifice!
Fairer than men, purer than angels blest,
The honor of the earth, and pride of Heaven confessed!"

VI.

" Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest sin,
Therefore I have anointed thee with oil,
And crowned thee Prince Vice-gerent; thou hast been
Faithful, and charitable, and free from guile,
Hence shalt thou of his trophies Hell despoil;
But thy throne be indissolubly firm,
Established on eterne foundations, while
The earth shall melt in elemental storm
To nothingness, and chaos suns and moons deform."

VII.

" Why do the heathen rage? why do they scoff
With taunting insults, and audacious ask
Dominion absolute? But thou shalt laugh
At their foul gibes, and their dark plots unmask;
To bind and vex them sore shall be thy task.
I here declare again my old decree,
That in My glory exalted thou shalt bask,
Hope of the human race, and reign for me
In Zion, and my promised King Messiah be."

VIII.

" My regal chariot take, within thy hand
Grasp my linked bolts of thunder, on thy thigh
Gird my sword terrible, and with a band
Of seraphim embattled, fire the sky
With the full blazon of thy majesty;
From their oppressors first my saints lead out,
Then Gog's vile myrmidons, who proud defy
Our arms rebellious, thou shalt utter rout.
And Sin and Death shalt bind with a triumphant shout."

IX.

Low-bowing meek and reverent before
The seat supreme, "O, Holiest and Best!"
Answered the Substitute of Heavenly Power,
"Thy mission I accept, to guard the blest,
And them chastise who have Thy saints oppressed,
For justice caveats grace; and for this favor,
That thou hast me Thy deputy confessed
On earth, to serve Thee shall be my endeavor,
And Thy regard to merit, and Thy trust forever;"

X.

"And serving Thee, Thy glory I partake,
Whom still to serve will be my dearest joy.
Clad in Thy matchless armor, I shall make
A facile conquest, and thy foes destroy;
And the obstreperous fiend back shall fly
With hideous overthrow. Then shall I reign
The administrator of thy sovereignty;
And on the earth, henceforward free from pain,
From mulct of death exempt, shall I Thy laws
maintain."

XI.

As thus they colloquied, the air was stirred
With the aroma of elysian balms,
While solemn peace and awe inspired each word,
And sacred love. The angels wave their palms,
Applauding, and intone melodious psalms,
Answered by angel wings from farthest star:
"O Lord Emanuel! who can stand in arms
Against Thee, in the harnessed ranks of war,
Above all dominations, princedoms, sceptres far?"

XII.

Then Jesus leaves his throne involved in clouds,
And homage fresh pays to his Father God,
Conducted to the Presence by thronged crowds
Of Heaven's peerage, who obeisance nod
To him assuming the vice-regent's rod,
And sceptre of the universal Lord;
And as the multitudinous myriads trod
The gem-mosaic pavement, loud was heard
This anthem jubilant to the imbodied Word:

XIII.

"Worthy's the Lamb that was slain to receive
Honor, and glory, and dominion, and power!
And blessings and laudations let us give
To the Almighty Father evermore,
Who on His loved inheritor doth pour
The oil of joy, and consecrate him blest
Above his fellows!" And the spirits shower
Along the sapphire floor his footsteps pressed
The diadems, and crowns, and wreaths of light that crest

XIV.

Their hyacinthine curls, cast down before him.
Invested with the prowess of his Sire,
He looks upon the earth, where loud implore him
His persecuted church to come with fire,
And their oppressors punish in his ire;
And now, accompanied by a princely host,
Who to escort him emulous aspire,
He reaches, in his chariot, to the coast
Of Heaven, washed by seas of worlds in distance lost.

XV.

Aloft on wings of cherubim he rides
  Over the kindling clouds of amber skies,
And through the hyaline his convoy guides,
  Ablaze with pomp of myriad starry eyes,
  That tint the concave round with meteor dyes;
And crowds affrighted, looking from the earth,
  Behold the omens amid stifled cries,
But with no merriment or riot mirth,
As on the pyrrhic road careers the splendor forth.

XVI.

The path is paved with lightnings where the wheels,
  Rattling through flame and smoking thunders, roll;
The welkin, weighted with the glory, reels,
  And, lined with beryl fires from pole to pole,
  Glows like a furnace to their orbit's goal;
And freedom to the captive is the sight,
  Bearing his ransomed manumission scroll;
Heaven to the transcendental anchorite,
Peopling the abyss of dreams with real shapes of light:

XVII.

And while the ardent tempest runs about
  Before his way through ether fields above,
He calls to his archangels with a shout:
  "To those who are the objects of my love
  Proceed, and on your sunbeam pinions move,
My faithful servants, and alarums sound,
  And gather my elect where'er they rove,
The dead and living, whether under ground,
On land, in sea, or air, wherever they are found."

XVIII.

" Earth shall disclose their buried blood, the main
Cast up their frames; palm hill and cactus heath
Teem with a second birth; the millet plain
Struggle with pangs of travail; living breath
Shall clods respire, and rise the turf beneath;
The wind conceive, and ope her laboring womb:
For I have made a covenant with death,
His bond to cancel and forego the tomb,
That pulseless dust with life original may bloom."

XIX.

Immediately depart, on gold-down plumes,
Four couriers, where terraqueous mists disperse;
The hoar frost fanned to dewy fragrance fumes,
The snow flakes melt to flowers, as they immerse
In waves of air, or flanks of mountains pierce,
Touting their summons with a welcome call,
That tells of benizons, and not a curse:
The dead awake, cast off their funeral pall,
And rise from caves of earth, and from the ocean's hall.

XX.

In the rock iron-ribbed and quarry's bed
The strata split, and, opening seams and rents,
Exhume the hostelry where bones had laid,
Impetrified to fossil monuments;
But flesh and sinews, nerves and filaments
Had volatilized in their oblivious sleep;
The flinty skulls and slaty ossements

Begin to trepidate, the stones to creep,
And breaths to eddy round, as to the mounds they
sweep,

XXI.

And lo! the relics shape, and stand, and live!
And in the floods of brine appears a storm;
Shoals of dead bodies, swarming like a hive,
Push through the glaucous surface of the calm:
And, as emerges each resussate form,
It lifts the water to a plashing wave,
Till poppling billows the smooth seas deform,
Each surge a womb become that was a grave,
And mews and petrels flying past them shriek and rave.

XXII.

And in the blue void, where, for ages past,
As breezy wind, had flitted ghosts, a throng
Impalpable as thoughts, round them they cast
The lineaments that did to them belong,
As swiftly as shadows glide the clouds among;
And as the Fata Morgana over sand
Quiver, daguerrotyped in columns long;
So in the sunshine their translucent band,
With star-drop flicker fire the matitutinal land.

XXIII.

And in the twinkling of an eye are changed
The living saints: a moment they had been
Men, and a moment more are gods, and ranged
Higher than angels, with a human mien,
But fulgent with supernal beauty's sheen!

So in a trance of thought the poet steals
From out the earth to where the Heavens are seen,
Forgets that he is flesh, and only feels
The spirit of the muse who wonders strange reveals.

XXIV.

Surpassing dreams of hope, they taste a peace
Beyond beatitude; and they repair
From sacred Palestine, and classic Greece,
From the Atlantis of the Western Star,
From Cashmere's gardens of white hersinghar,
From Erin's primrose, and May-kirtled croft,
From the Australian Cross to arctic Bear;
All startle up, and all are caught aloft,
Drawn in circumfluous clouds that bear them as a raft.

XXV.

As they ascend, mounted in fiery cars,
They hear assemblies of bright angels sing
Their Christmas welcome to the eternal stars,
And answer back until with echoes ring
The vaults celestial murmuring, murmuring:
"O dreadful Grave! where is thy victory?
O Death! where is thy formidable sting?
Sin is the sting of Death, but thanks to thee,
That over Hell and Death we conquerors shall be!"

XXVI.

Their Savior and Redeemer they behold,
Beautiful as Love, gentle as Pity, bright
Amid the splendent beams of purple and gold,
Lustrous as is the sun's meridian light,

And glorious as the hemisphere at night;
Fair as the flowers on the breast of earth,
Sublimely terrible in Heaven's might;
With cries exultant and with pious mirth
They see his friendly arms to them extended forth.

XXVII.

They view his face divine, that had shed tears,
The hands that to the cross had once been nailed;
That face irradiate with smiles appears
Of love propitious, not in sorrow veiled,
Nor with remembrance of his passion paled;
Those hands, in hovering dove-like spirit spread,
With salutations them prevenient hailed,
And charged with gifts and honors on each head
Of martyred saints were laid, who had for conscience bled.

XXVIII.

The palms of victory are given these,
And golden crowns of glory, and the wreath
In triple strand of faith and truth and peace,
Of amaranthine bloom that knows no death,
Immortal flowers, whose sweet embalming breath
Is purest prayer: and now the cohorts sound
Their silver bugles, whose voice uttereth
Music no mortal tongue hath ever found,
Nor mortal ear hath heard in minster aisles rebound:

XXIX.

"To him, our friend who loved us, unto him
Who hath absolved us by his precious blood,

Quickener of flesh to life, we raise this hymn,
Who otherwise impenitent had stood;
But he hath made us wise and true and good,
And Kings, and Priests, to his God and to ours,
To live as brothers in beatitude,
While ever dure unintermittent hours,
To whom shall bow thrones, virtues, dignities, and powers."

XXX.

Theirs was the glory of the golden sun,
Or the moon's meeker silvery aureole,
Or glitter of the stars; and as each one
Differs from neighbor orb as on they roll,
So shines a different lustre on each soul;
On all love shines, who had witnessed to their faith
By works devout, smocked in untarnished stole,
Anointed Cherubs, who with lying breath,
Idolatrous, had not adored the King of Death.

XXXI.

Lo! far above the altitude of clouds,
In a maleficent red comet's glare,
The Powers of Darkness, abominable broods,
In honor of their Lord, Prince of the Air,
Hold revels rampant, mid the whirling flare
Of cosmic atoms, while he cursing smites
The earth with withering bane and mortal snare,
Blasts with the taint worm, and with murrain blights,
And where he blows his breath the clammy canker lights.

XXXII.

As, gloating over the havoc which he spreads,
He strikes his plagues, the Son of Heaven he sees,
Whom more than Hell's worst punishment he dreads,
And strives to fly; but stiff his sinews freeze,
And him in cataleptic terror seize
The retinue cherubic, and fast bind
To the bright chariot's blazing orbs, through seas
Of flooding ether wafted, in the wind
Of hurricanes and rack and thunderbolts combined.

XXXIII.

Then mounts the cavalcade magnificent
In splendor to the rain-bow vaulted sky,
Back to the pomp of sapphire glory bent,
Back to the star-blaze of the Throne on High,
Leading Hell captive in captivity,
Mid peans flourished on the trumpet blast,
And golden harps that strike a jubilee:—
"The rule of Satan on the earth is past,
For lo! Messiah comes, whose reign shall ever last."

XXXIV.

"Lift up your heads, ye everlasting doors,
And let the Prince of Heaven in to be
Throned in the Presence Chamber, on the floors
Of paven sunshine, in a jasper sea;
And his saints enter in the Sanctuary!
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates!"
"Who is this Prince of Glory?" "It is he
Who with his army of the faithful waits:
O strew with palms the way his car illuminates."

XXXV.

Then thus the delegated majesty,
Plenipotent, to the anarch of all ill:—
"How the blood-stains of thine iniquity
Profane and darken the Celestial Hill,
Where sanguine clouds the Tabernacle fill,
And hide from Sons of Light the Seat of Bliss;
How lowering faces and the eyes that kill
Glow baleful on thee through the fires that hiss,
Where thronged with Cherubim, the Seat of Mercy is."

XXXVI.

"From favor interdicted, and the face
Of Love benignant, unto thee austere
And terrible, here mayst thou brief retrace
The pristine purity, crystalline clear,
Of thine estate, ere from thy native sphere,
Forfeit by sin, its penalty to pay,
Thou wast releagued to the asylum drear
Of dismal woe. But here thou must not stay;
Look on what thou hast lost, then back resume thy way."

XXXVII.

"Ah me!" returned the fiend, humbled tame
By transitory stings of true remorse:—
"Far otherwise I've seen, then without shame,
His countenance, who is the primal source
Of every good, when His eyes smiled applause,
And His lips sounded praise, and His love shone
A sun without a cloud, and without pause

Sweet halleluiahs to the Blessed Throne
Were sung by all the blest—by me—alas undone!"

XXXVIII.

He said no more, reluctant to confess
His obvious misery, for pride obdured
His soul, and envy of the happiness,
Debarred to him, its beauteous bloom obscured:
Better to be in Hell, its Lord immured,
Than dwell in Paradise, and there the smart
Bear of submission: with that thought allured,
As lightning flashing, with Hell in his heart,
He fled, and with him night, and sin, and death depart.

XXXIX.

The shadow vanished, instantly the Fount
Of light its treasury of beams shot forth,
The storm dispersing which had cloaked the Mount,
Where in the blaze exists supernal Worth.
The sweet Complacence of the Heavens and earth
Salutes His Father, in the inner shrine
Conspicuous seen, where flaming circles girth
The altar, and the golden candles shine,
And kneels with all his saints before the seat divine.

XL.

And these the first fruits of his spiritual church,
Virginal of a blemish or a stain,
Before that Love whose depth is beyond search
He proud presents; e'en as the Hebrew swain
Culled the first yellow sheaf of the ripe grain,

And waved it to the Lord, an act of grace!
And He, whose presence fills the land and main,
Whose effluence is uncircumscribed space,
Receives them there in state with an approving face.

XLI.

Then shall Jehovah celebrate the rites
Of mystic marriage ties betwixt the Lamb
And his immaculate Church, amid delights
Unutterable, too sweet to own a name,
And clouds of flowers, and starry cressets' flame,
The union of the human and divine,
Where godhead dwells incarnate in the frame,
A palingenesis, where virtues shine
Bright as the sacrifice accepted on the shrine.

XLII.

Clothed with the sun, she stepped upon the moon,
A tire of twelve stars filletted her brow,
Her head a nimbus hooded like a noon:
"Rise and with light of Easter Morning glow,"
The voice of Heaven calls, that all may bow
To spotless Beauty, Mother of all joy,
And sinless fealty and allegiance vow:
Goddess of Grace, beatified on high,
Of Truth the Spouse beloved, Queen of the elysian sky."

XLIII.

Let us be glad! O let us all rejoice!
The bride is ready, in fine robes arrayed,
Fair is her face, and pleasant is her voice;

And she hath to her Lord due homage paid,
And gage of love and pledge of faith has made:
Blessed are they who to this festival
Were guests invited! Blest the risen dead,
And saints translated without shroud or pall,
The poor, the meek, the sad, called to this banquet hall!

XLIV.

Blest were the virgins, who with lamps went forth
To meet the bridegroom, and to light his way!
They entered with him in the house of mirth,
Where care was happy, and where grief was gay,
For there the bridegroom solaced pain away:
But thence the foolish maidens who had slept,
Whose lamps untrimmed with oil could give no ray,
Because their Lord's command they had not kept,
Were banished, and in darkness shadowing death sore wept.

XLV.

O what is life? A dream of troubled sleep
Haunted by phantoms, whence we wake to find
'Twas but a dream: yet is the mystery deep,
Insoluble, till death informs the mind
Of secrets still more subtle and refined:
'Tis as a dew-drop crisping in the floods,
That melt into the sea, or gust of wind,
That strikes the twinkling foliage of the woods,
Then vanishes to unknown, far-off solitudes.

XLVI.

But if the life be breath, it is the air
The universe encircling; if to feel,
To hate, and fear, be here our only care,
Ah, when his presence blest shall death reveal,
Then shall we all things know and love as well:
In death than birth then happier is our fate!
For 'tis the door man enters in to dwell,
And finds himself a god inside the gate,
Where he may grow in grace, with endless joys elate.

XLVII.

And what is fame? A summer's nettle-rash,
Touch of the poison oak, the upas breath,
Taste of the bitter fruit whose heart is ash,
The rattle of the snake whose bite is death,
The thunder's growl that lightning answereth!
Yes; and the talk of God in Eden's grove,
That with the work of His hands communeth,
The still small voice, which ever whispers Love!
This is the pearl of price all worldly wealth above!

XLVIII.

A few short years of morbid frailties,
And then we cease to be or flesh or bone;
We die a moment, but eternities
Of perfect blessedness will be our own,
Through ages and through eons living on:
Then God will wipe all tears from off our eyes,
And we shall be, as Jesus is, His Son,
When never heart hath felt the ecstasies
He hath prepared for them, who love Him, in the skies.

THE REIGN OF GOG.

CANTO VI.

I.

MERRILY rose the morn. What careth Time
For man, or for his works, or good or ill?
With steady tramp along his course sublime
He treads the zodiac, and dim shadows fill
The space he leaves behind; the glowing hill
He touches with his foot, and lo! the vale
Leaps into life and beauty; and lake and rill
Dance to the music of the summer gale,
Or mourn the oreads dead in winter's sobbing wail.

II.

What if the clouds of night enshroud the skies,
The sun will shine to-morrow; if there seem
A shuffling riddle of perplexities,
Still this great world organic, which we deem
A phantom in the dark, or waking dream,
Is a reality, and grows and breeds;
With hiving life earth, flood, and ether teem,
Creatures exist in microscopic seeds,
And forests live within the pollen spores of weeds.

III.

Primeval Factory, where the skilled Sun,
Arch-Chemist, from the rock and viewless air
And tasteless vapor hath all clothing spun,
And doth all food and nourishment prepare,
Tissues of wool, fibres of fur and hair,
All flesh of brain and tendon, nerve and brawn,
And perfumes for the toilet of the fair,
Your spiral tubes and cells toil from the dawn,
Then shut up shop, and sleep, when your day's work is done.

IV.

Since then this globe is the Creator's glory,
And its least minims wonders, O what are
Those worlds on high, and what their wondrous story?
What can we learn of orbs that are so far?
Interrogate yon sun, that moon, that star?
They give no answer! The infinitude
Confounds us; Science breaks her calendar,
The Muse her style, in melancholy mood
Lost in the maze of thought that chills the very blood.

V.

Temple of light, where Nature worships God!
His Palace, His Pavilion, and His Throne,
Built on eternity! along this road
Across the intervening gulf have gone
Myriads of saints and martyrs where have shone
Thy lamps that never darken in the skies;
O while I gaze on thy fire-studded zone,
I feel a kindred grandeur in me rise,
And long with daring thought to pierce thy mysteries!

VI.

Then strange the oracle of Fancy speaks
Its teachings sibylline about the soul,
When, disembodied, it bewildered seeks
Its home, where Mazzaroths in sapphire roll,
Or wreck on reefs where seas of Chaos shoal;
Where living forms Sleep and the Grave disclose,
And figures on his hieroglyphic scroll
Death writes, of fears, and hopes, and joys, and woes:
We read in vain the text of undeciphered shows.

VII.

The shapes existing now will cease to be
A short time hence for the whole universe;
Yet nothing perishes: the dust will see
The future as the past, and nothing worse,
No blessing more, nor less of any curse;
And enter into other forms of life,
A law not arbitrary and perverse,
But providential, conquering war and strife
Through love and joy, with new creation ever rife.

VIII.

But the mind will to realms ethereal rise,
High in the air, and play with beams of light,
Sport in the lunar ray, through cloudy skies
Ride on the whirlwind in the stormy night,
And track the blazing trains of meteors bright,
Dare the full splendor of the midday sun,
And wing its flight untired to Heaven's height,
Nor fear to soar where sits upon His Throne,
The Great I AM—the First and Last—the All in One.

IX.

Or, are the instincts with which I'm endowed
But mere delusions? Is the voice I hear
Speaking in thunder in the tempest cloud,
In the soft murmur of the summer air,
And in the breathings of my conscience clear,
The mocking echo of a monstrous lie?
Is there no loving Father anywhere,
But a stern Force and dire Necessity?
And is eternal Life but Sleep eternally?

X.

Is the thought of a Shakspeare only dust?
And Newton's reason but a puff of wind?
Do particles of lime and iron rust,
And grains of phosphorus compose the mind?
And in truth shall we ashes only find?
Ah! miserable race, if this were true,
Left in a labyrinth to grope purblind!
But Faith scans further than e'er Science knew,
And can in man a soul, a God in nature view.

XI.

Faith is an inspiration of the truth;
It clears the darkness from the night of thought,
And shows life growing in primordial youth;
A prophet in a fiery chariot caught,
And flaming coursers, it is breathless brought
To Heaven's threshold in wild ecstasy;
It sees worlds rising in the abyss of nought,
The miracles of death, the opening sky,
And God, unveiled to sense, on His white Throne on high.

XII.

A rest allowed of three days to recruit
His myrmidons, the Scourge of War resumed
His march, destroying on his blood-stained route
Whatever Flora or Pomona bloomed;
And shepherds' huts and peasants' shielings doomed
To indiscriminate sack; and soon arrived
At where Samaria's scanty ruins loomed,
A square piazza with cut pillars, rived
By ancient war and rapine, which nought else survived.

XIII.

He pitched his tent that eve at Jacob's well,
Where the frail leman found the flowing Spring
Of Life eternal, quenching Death and Hell.
"Ye know not that which ye are worshipping,"
Said Truth unto her; "psalms and hymns ye sing,
Lip-service to a god of wood or stone;
But the hour comes when ye shall incense bring,
The homage of the heart to Him alone,
Who spirit is, not flesh, the Everlasting One!"

XIV.

At early dawn the Heir of Satan took
Naplouse, the Sichem of primeval days,
Where, when he had his father's land forsook,
The Friend of God did first an altar raise
To the Elohim strange, and offer praise
To the Unknown. Between two brother hills,
"Of Blessing and of Cursing" named, it lays,
'Twixt Jacob blest and Esau cursed with ills,
A town of bosky bowers and green indented rills.

XV.

Swiftly Gog passes o'er the savage spot,
Where first was set up the palladium Ark,
Now tenantless; where jealous Jah was thought
To dwell in person, till misfortunes dark
Fell upon Israel. Now no ruins mark
The site where stood the golden sanctuary;
But Desolation howls in Shiloh stark,
The viper's den, and the hyena's sty,
Yet here the virgins yearly came to dance with glee.

XVI.

Here the boy Samuel dedicated was
To locks unshorn, and was the ritual taught
Of Syrian creeds, the prototypes of mass;
And here, when in the Temple's inner court,
The lamps went out, the air with voices fraught
Called "Samuel" from the shrine. "Speak, for I hear,"
Replied the wildered infant, who then caught
An inspiration from his very fear,
And was a prophet hence o'er kings to domineer.

XVII.

Thence on to Luz, where thrifty Wisdom dreamed
He saw a ladder climbing to the sky,
Up to the crystal doors, whence angels streamed
In lengthened files, cinctured in panoply,
And down and up the steps ceased not to fly;
And over it the Epiphany of Glory shone,
The Urim Thummim of the Deity;
Where built the patriarch o'er his pillow stone
A cromlech for the gate of God's pavilion.

XVIII.

"Surely," exclaimed he, waking, "here have trod
The footsteps of the Lord, which I did hear,
And I will call this cairn the House of God,
For o'er this place His Presence, shining clear,
Filled my admonished soul with dreadful fear:"
Hence known as Bethel. Thence to Gibeah soon
The vanguard fares, where till the flesh grew sere,
Hanging on gibbets on the rocky dune,
The mother watched her sons beneath the sickening moon.

XIX.

Where gads the bitter wild gourd for the night
They camped, where erst was heard a wailing sore,
The hollow shriek of Rachel's buried sprite,
Weeping because her children were no more;
And now again the mother's cries deplore
Her slaughtered innocents. Ah! sad the smart
When from its stem is culled the earliest flower!
But still more painful when the widowed heart
Must from its last beloved and sweetest blossom part!

XX.

Grief is the Angel that descends to stir
Life's troubled waters that the sick may heal—
The Seraph sitting at the sepulchre,
Who saith, "Fear not, he's risen, and his weal,
In keeping safe, is marked with Heaven's seal:
He, whom thou seek'st, if thou should'st not find here,
If in his cave of spectres Death conceal,
Is ne'ertheless not dead, but to the sphere
Of sempiternal joy sped from his mortal bier."

XXI.

Amid the wilderness of ocean round
The Dove no rock to rest her weary foot,
Or for a moment fold her pinions found;
But to the Ark returned ere she could shoot
Her flight, and bring the slivered olive's fruit:
So when solstitial droughts of Sorrow dry
The fount of Hope, that waters branch and root,
Fly to the Well that's in the Sanctuary,
Whence thou mayst strengthened preen thy feathers for the sky.

XXII.

Ah, many a wretched mother, many a child,
Niobes and Astyanaxes, pine,
And many a brother, many a sister, wild,
Forlorn, and friendless! As the chevrels whine
Beside their dead dams on the lea supine;
So nurselings by their parent's corpses sob:
No more on them paternal eyes will shine,
Nor lips maternal kisses from them rob,
Nor mother's pillowing breast beneath their heads will throb.

XXIII.

Fair Zilia from her window often looks
To listen for Adoram's footstep fall;
Suspense of doubt intolerant she brooks:
Sometimes her name she thinks she hears him call,
And startles at a passing funeral:
There is an anxious flush upon her cheek,
And dismal presages her mind appal;
And yet at times a smile, serene and meek,
Her hopeful trust, the balm of grief, would gently speak:

XXIV.

Then shudders pale when they her husband tell
Had wounded been, and was a prisoner now;
To love and suffer is our Heaven and Hell!
Life is a legacy of certain woe,
And Love a lease that has short term to go,
But Joy an alibi who is no where!
She lifts to azure skies her pallid brow
In dumb appeal, "O why is misery here?
And why should douleur when unmerited appear?"

XXV.

And Heaven interpellated answers, "Love!—
Love constant, faithful, dutiful, devout—
Love that is sent thy fortitude to prove:
What would be human happiness without
Its trials? but a Corybantic route!
Look to thy bridal past with gratitude,
And though thou mayst the dark of future doubt;
Yet it comes from the Author of all Good,
Who can from seeming ill educe beatitude."

XXVI.

"Affliction is the golden chain that draws
Thine earth to Heaven. Hence the wistful sigh
For bliss, unsatisfied through nature's laws,
The discontent sublime that in the sky
Seeks for the lotus of tranquillity,
Peace that is born of faith, by patience tried,
Where couched on golden clouds immortals lie,
And festal lamps are lit at eventide,
And joy-bells peal their chimes to hail the affianced
bride."

XXVII.

'Twas now the season of the equinox
Autumnal, when in even scales on high
The days and nights are weighed; with hurtling shocks
The gales descended from the lowering sky,
And stripped the forests of their panoply;
But not with laughter songs and rustic play
Were the grapes gathered, but were left to dry
And wither on their stalks; and now display
Red fields their chequered patches where sere vines decay:

XXVIII.

Now the bald crown of barren Pisgah's head
Is curled with mist, and light prelusive showers
The runnels fill, rejoicing in their bed,
Leaping o'er ledges, rushing through the moors,
To tell the tidings to the drooping flowers,
Parched by the summer's drought; the sunshine wan
Streaked hectic flushes on deserted bowers,
And the slant shadows of the hills that ran
Down to the plain seemed steps of winter's hurrying van.

XXIX.

The height of Neby Samuel is attained
By the advancing army, and in state
Predominant the cavalcade has gained
The purlieus of the Holy Town, where hate,
Despair, and fear, and scorn, their passage wait:
The soldan on his charger, shod with gold,
And freaked with tassels, passed the northern gate,
Where recreant burghers, who their God had sold,
With odious zeal, obsequious, their allegiance told.

XXX.

And as he moved along the crowd increased;
Men cast their cloaks and women threw their shawls,
And laid them on the ground where his horse paced;
Young maidens scattered, as at carnivals,
Sweet flowers before him, singing madrigals;
Children were on their parents' shoulders raised,
And gazed affrighted, for the pomp appals;
Before his path were myrtle branches placed,
And fronds of palms were waved by cravens cowed and dazed.

XXXI.

Hundreds of his own followers grovelling fell
Down in the mire, too happy if he rode
Their bodies over, for strong was the spell,
That could believe that monster was a god,
And o'er their skulls he contumelious trod.
"O Lord, above all Lords preëminent!"
Exclaimed the cowering brute fanatic sod:—
"Who's like to thee, and who thine armament
Can vanquish or resist, our king omnipotent?"

XXXII.

"With joy thy faithful lieges are elate
To see their glorious conquering hero come
To assume irrevocably his estate
O'er all the world, with rolling beat of drum,
And flourish of the shawms and cannon's boom:
Let us be glad, and sing, and shout, and laugh!
Now stoop your heads, ye nations, and be dumb,
For he shall break you with an iron staff,
And on his threshing floor scatter your seed as chaff."

XXXIII.

From the adjoining avenues and lanes
Fresh rabble run the pageant rout to swell:
A shower of bouquets from the windows rains,
The anger of the bloody Sword to quell,
They think the Key of earth and Heaven and Hell:
The balconies and terraced roofs are thronged
With bevies of fair women, keen to sell
Their May-bloom for his favor, and who longed
To lure the tyrant's lust, who had their country wronged.

XXXIV.

From latticed casements, domes and parapets
Hung silken mercery of Lyons' dye,
And standards flaunted and gilt bannerets,
While shouts of welcome drowned the secret sigh;
Here lips with smiles were varnished, there the eye
A love-shaft darted; kerchief, veil, and scarf
Were waved as marched the shaggy cohorts by,
And greetings sensual answered by a laugh,
As nodded shameless dames, and bowed the gew-gawed staff.

XXXV.

'Tis still the bravo, whom the world reveres,
And canonizes as its god divine,
Most homage paying there where most it fears!
To the Destroyer thousand altars shine
With sacrificial flame, while the benign
Creator of what's good a sacrifice
Is offered up to sin, or left to pine
In wretchedness: man honors crime and lies,
But truth and genius hates, and persecutes the wise.

XXXVI.

Come here thou flunky carl! down on thy knees,
Thou heartless, mindless, soulless scribe, and troll
Thy hyperbolic ranting rhapsodies,
That wretch to honor, on whose perjured soul
Is blood, fit service for a fustian fool,
Bombastic pedagogue, and low poltroon!
"The meek and just let murdering heroes rule!
The jaguar hunts the ape," cries the buffoon;
"So human tigers ought to hunt the man baboon!"

XXXVII.

Now at the palace-port the train alights,
But no officials came there to escort
The victor's entrance, who ascends the flights
Of porphyry steps to a wide pillared court,
With chiselled tracery and corbels fraught;
And thence proceeds through darksome empty halls,
And lonely chambers, where devices wrought
Of rich mosaics decorate the walls,
While from a metope an owlet hoots and calls.

XXXVIII.

Along the stuccoed ceiling spiders had
Spun their long webs, and on the chequered floor,
The snail his filmy streaks of silver made;
On the gray mullion, cut in leaf and flower,
On clustered shafts, and by the paneled door,
Basked the green lizard, wakened by the sound;
The bats shriek ghastly as from quoins they soar;
And just before his feet a snake unwound
Its plaited folds, and crawled in curves along the ground.

XXXIX.

Here Gog installed himself in royal state,
And sybaritic luxury; but sent
Ryno at once, his minister of fate,
Of hellish work appropriate instrument,
To Nile's doomed land, on baleful vengeance bent;
And the Old River Dragon was again
Hooked in her jaw; her native power spent
Since her great god incarnate had been slain,
The Bull that worshipped was throughout her fair domain.

XL.

Leaving his forces under the command
Of Rolf, the renegade, to guard the shore
Of the Red Sea, and watch El Mecca's sand,
The coasts of Yemen and Hedjaz to scour,
Afric to awe and Ind to overpower
In the ensuing summer, Ryno back
Returns to Zion through the gorge El-Ghor,
Past Petra's ruins, on the pilgrim's track,
Where eagles brood on cliffs amid the thunder rack.

XLI.

A census the draconian king ordained
Of all the Hebrew tribes in Palestine;
And the dime was of either sex arraigned
And butchered in cold blood, to serve as sign
To what calamities he would consign
More dreadful who should seek in arms to rise,
Or who should dare to murmur and repine;
A soul each moment from its troubles flies;
So eagles from the earthquake mount the tranquil skies.

XLII.

Then guardian Angels to the heart repair,
In night shade kneeling, striken sore with dole,
And oil and wine pour in the wounds of Care,
And Balm of Hope, prescribed to make them whole
By Mercy, the physician of the soul!
Blest office, often by some child from life
New snatched, performed, from pansy meadows stole,
Where flowers bloom thoughts, when the sad plaintive fife
And muffled drum announce the martial murders rife.

XLIII.

How sweet, when organized again in death
With brighter members, down on Jacob's stair
To visit earth, and with empyreal breath
Inhale the life-throb of our natal air,
And with a sympathy immortal share
The loved one's pain; to watch each budding grace
Unfold its petals, till an amaranth fair
It blows for Heaven; to look on each dear face,
And in night's visions fold them in a fond embrace!

XLIV.

He also claimed of every thing the tithe,
Of fish and reptile, and of bird and beast,
The premisce of the sheaves reaped by the scythe,
The fatlings of the flocks, his court to feast,
Nor spared the offerings of the eucharist;

Of grown up men for servants, youths and boys
He took without compunction whom he pleased,
And girls and spinsters for his palace toys,
And for his horrid harem's foul lascivious joys.

XLV.

A splendid structure was this palace, built
With colonades and open galleries,
Architrave, frieze, and cornice, carved and gilt,
And cloisters wainscoted with blazonries
Of arabesques enamelled, and balconies
With perforated sculpture on the stone;
Environed by a garden of tall trees—
The sycamine that silken robes had grown,
The terebinth whose head a score of centuries crown.

XLVI.

Here his debauch in a superb saloon
He held with bestial orgies bacchanal:
On opal tables, shining as the moon,
Was spread the banquet by the seneschal,
And revels and rude riot thronged the hall;
The floor was laid with Persian carpets soft,
With arras hangings tapestried the wall,
And on a dais was raised a chair aloft.
Sparkling with precious gems, as daisies in a croft.

XLVII.

The seats and divans were of ivory,
And thyine-wood the footstools, rich inlaid
With knops of bullion frosted filagree;
And costly essences a perfume shed,

Sweet as the tribute from a garden bed
Of rose and orange bloom, and murrhine vases,
With choicest flowers filled—an Eden made;
While bright noonday, a candelabra blazes
Above the board, and like a sun with all its rays is.

XLVIII.

The ruby-studded flagons fume with wine
Of bouquet exquisite and faultless gout,
In whose elixir pearls of bubbles shine,
Wild frolic spirits of the aerial dew,
Dancing with merry glee the liquor through;
And flaming juleps glow like tongues of fire
In crystal beakers, stained of every hue;
And sherbets scintillate, drugged to inspire
Jovial delights, and dalliance soft, and fierce desire.

XLIX.

Viands, the most esteemed and delicate,
Are heaped on porcelain most quaint and rare;
Exotic fruits, banana, mangoe, date,
Are piled on painted Japan lacquer ware;
All fragrant berries and sweet nuts are there;
Raisins which had their waxen bloom preserved,
As if still breathed on them the summer air;
In their own syrup figs that were conserved,
On carven trays of scented sandalwood are served.

L.

Boisterous the cymbals clash, the hautboys blore,
Loud bang the gongs as thunderclaps that break;
Bassoons, and clarinets, and trombones roar;

And with their din the dreamy soul awake
To thoughts heroic; while the viols speak
A language softer than seductive words;
And syren harmony, that charms the snake,
Subdues at will the hearts of savage lords:
The spells of Orpheus tamed the forest's feline hordes.

LI.

Then Almeh girls are introduced to dance,
Mobled in gauzy byssus, light as wind,
And look as though through cloudlets they advance,
Junos in mist, whose forms voluptuous bind
The floating draperies, round them unconfined,
Concealing not, but lining out the shape,
The nude conspicuous made to attract the mind,
Pleased and bewildered till the senses gape
At bitter sweets, though hid, exposed from heel to nape.

LII.

To melting swoons of melody they move,
Graceful, yet sensuous, languorous, yet lithe,
Breathing the blandishments of wanton love,
And bliss libidinous; then pert and blithe
And nimble as the elves of fairy myth:
In wreathed embraces limbs and bodies twine,
In amorous tangles coiled, as boas writhe;
With panting hearts and heaving bosoms join,
And bright with gold bezants and silver crescents shine.

LIII.

Bootless were then the bodice or the shawl!
The lynx-eye pierces of delirious lust

Through the transparent vest, the lace, through all;
And envious folds licentious fancies thrust
Aside, and riot on the swelling bust,
And all the witchery of wonders there;
Then reels the masque obscene through Hell adust:
Alas! how foul is woman, yet how fair!
An angel and a beast in her Circean lair!

LIV.

And as the scarlet joys flash from keen eyne,
The soul turns crazy and the senses blind;
Grief laughs, but soon with aching bliss to pine,
Pleasure at wisdom cavils care to find,
False friends before them, and dread foes behind,
The Heaven of Fools, the Madman's Paradise!
O Love, that all endures, and, ever kind,
Would pardon all, weep for the blasphemies,
That would with these dark rites profane thy secret sighs!

LV.

Such were the wassail tournaments that passed
In Peor's lewd conventicle; but this night
The tender Zilia, gyved with trouble fast,
Was led into the hall, in sorry plight;
The dower of beauty is a gift of spite.
"O canst thou love, fair lady?" asked the king;
"For thou shalt be the queen of my delight,
And share my couch, and these with lutes shall sing
Thee to sooth sleep, and to new joys awakening."

LVI.

"Fiend, desist! I never can love thee!"
Returned the matron mid dire agonies
Of honor hurt and wounded modesty:—
"Him I love only, who my husband is,
A captive in thy dungeon's dark abyss."
"He shall be free at once if thou wilt smile,
And yield thee, not disdainful, to my bliss."—
"Never my soul shall such a sin defile!
I loathe thy foul advance, and spurn thee, monster vile!"

LVII.

"Thou speakest like an Amazon in arms!
But beauty's lips love's nectary should be;"
Replied the incubus:—"Why keep thy charms
Locked in a casket in obscurity?
Love freely gives, nor doles out charity,
Pleased to make others happy; but a frown
Was never badge of his divinity.
Thy beauteous temples with this chaplet crown,
And in this milk of Venus bashful scruples drown."

LVIII.

"A braid of serpents is that flowery wreath,
And in that cup's their venom. Thou hast spoiled
With lust and rapine, sacrilege and death
This holy land; its hearths thou hast defiled,
Its altars desecrated; thou hast toiled
For evil as a slave, whipped to his work;
Not only men in arms, but the mere child
Thou'st slaughtered; demons in thy senses lurk,
Hell's atheist priest thy heart in Hell's blaspheming kirk!"

LIX.

"Feed with the bread of scalding, blistering tears
Thy rage, dread tiger! groans thy daily food,
And gasps of agony, and palsied fears!
Let thy revenge and malice drink hot blood,
Foul Death-Snake crawling in a slough of mud!
Scourge to the living, curse to the unborn!
A terror not to evil, but to good!
Thou darnel choking bearded ears of corn!
Thou murrain-breeding frost that kills the lamb new-shorn."

LX.

"Beware lest thy vituperative words
Accuse thy life!" "I nothing have to fear
From thee, or from thy minions' dastard swords.
What canst thou do that I should dread to bear?"
"I'll rack thy husband, dame, and thou shalt hear
His groans, and see him struggling hard to die,
Yet death shall not come near him; and I'll tear
Thy tongue for uttering impiety,
And for thy hate and pride pluck out thy scornful eye."

LXI.

The menace terrified the loving wife,
Pale as if hemlock on her cheek the blood
Had froze exanimate; but short the strife
'Twixt fear and honor: back the pulses flowed
The ebbing tide of crimson shame till glowed
Her face a furnace; quick she gasped for breath
To dike the rising, inundating flood
Of inward grief; prepared to suffer death,
Thus she addressed her God to strengthen fast her faith.

LXII.

"O Thou, who'rt clothed with radiant stars, and hast
The Heavens for Thy Palace, whose white Throne
Is built through space with strong foundations fast
On every orb secured, who walk'st alone,
Unseen, the pathless firmament upon,
Rid'st on the wings of Time through the thick crowd
Of living worlds, and hang'st the sun-dyed zone
Of woven dew Thy banner in the cloud,
Dost Thou in proud disdain Thy face divine enshroud?"

LXIII.

"Who drivest in Thy chariot for Thy steeds
The lightning yoked with thunder, who on waves
Tread'st, and the storm in silent calm recedes,
Who blowest with Thy breath, and the blast raves
And surging billows yawn with myriad graves,
O art Thou incommunicable to man,
Who, when he calls upon thee but vainly craves
For a kind Father, failing Thee to scan?
O wilt Thou, still unknown, him from Thy presence ban?"

LXIV.

"In Thy impenetrable omniscience hid,
Veiled in the splendor of Thine infinite glory,
Dost thou him scorn his puny cares amid,
And mean emprises, to his piteous story
Deaf and indifferent, nor grieved nor sorry?
Art Thou insensible to his agony?
Shall thy keen knife of wrath be always gory,
And Death forge weapons in Thine armory?
Thy mercy, mercy I pray with due humility!"

LXV.

Then to the tempter:—"Harken to my prayer!
My husband from the felon's jail release!
And when shall press on thee a load of care,
May Heaven in pity then thy burden ease,
And send to thee a messenger of peace!
O spare his life! to me than mine more dear!
And to whatever torture thou mayst please
Me to condemn, whatever toil severe,
I will endure without a murmur or a tear!"

LXVI.

"Can I not sue for favor for my lord?
Can I not plead with thee?" "Yes, thou shalt plead,
As pleads the antelope when it has implored
The hungry pard, and its torn members bleed
Beneath his fangs. Slaves, drag her to my bed,
Her couch of pleasure or her burial bier?"
"The angel that protects the virtuous head
Be now my shield against this devil here:
O Gog, I summon thee in judgment to appear."

LXVII.

Gog snatched his poniard and, inebriate
With wine and passion, plunged it in her side,
And let her soul out through a narrow gate;
She reeled, and quivering fell, and gasping died
And quickly to her ruthful Father hied;
Who wipes the flowing tears from dolorous eyes,
And touches the dead lips revivified:
Aneled and shrived all her sin's penalties,
In the Good Shepherd's breast, a Lamb of God she lies.

LXVIII.

Brief was thy dream of life, and briefer still
Thy dream of bliss utopian, passed away
To where thou canst no more feel mortal ill!
As a bright star unseen in the broad day,
His Cynosure, Love sought thee, but thy ray
Blessed not his vision, and the mournful hours
Like phantoms crept that after shadows play;
Yet when the thundering storm most angry lowers,
Across its frown where blackest smiles the arch of showers.

LXIX.

Why hast Thou made the beautiful so sad?
We gaze spell-bound, till the delicious sight
Sinks in the heart, with melancholy mad
To muse so sweet a morn, so soft a light
Must change, and fade, and darken into night:
Where dost thou hide the lovely, Death, oh where?
That the fond soul may thither take its flight,
To sunset islands of the summer air;
For never grave can hold the beautiful and fair.

LXX.

Although the lord of earth, man is but here
An alien, for his home is in the skies:
The problem dark of evil will be there
Resolved, and sorrow's painful mysteries;
There the dead flowers of sacred memories
Preserve their native odor, and smell sweet
As holy incense, where if nature sighs,
'Tis with the glory of the Paraclete,
For human sense of love with joyaunce too replete.

THE ADVENT OF THE MESSIAH.

CANTO VII.

I.

ALONG the valley of Jehosaphat,
And on the Mount of Olives lie encamped
Gog's lawless army, living on the fat
Of the rich land, whose tilth they reckless tramped,
And in the primaveral furrows stamped
The bladed foison; in their horse-hair tents
Carousing, till bedaubed with wine they ramped
As fauns and satyrs, with their clouts in rents
From drunken broils amidst the graves and monuments.

II.

Many took shelter in the succoth bowers,
Wattled with boughs umbrageous 'gainst the cold,
Rude wurleys pervious to the vagrant showers;
And such as still the savage wanderers hold
In hearse-like she-oak glade or scrubby wold;
Where at the full moon the corroboree
With shield and spear is danced by warriors bold,
Painted with ochre, while the hue and cry
The dingoes frighten prowling near the sheep-pens by.

III.

Close to the sepulchres the Kedron ran
Through feathered papyrus and banks of bays,
A bubbling brooklet 'mid the flags that fan
Its fretted surface; further through the haze
The gilded towers of the Temple blaze;
A golden sunshine burnished by the light;
And domes, and cupolas, and steeples raise
Their heads above the gray frieze cloak of night,
And tops of poplars bloom with burning chrysolite.

IV.

Still are the cuboid houses craped in mist,
Aurora's veil, but the fogs roll and rise,
And melt in saffron, rose, and amethyst—
Transmuted by the magic of the skies;
The wild thorpe with the cultured garden vies;
Both seem a field of verdant fire to be,
Freckled with snowy blooms and scarlet dyes;
Vineyards and corn-fields clothe the hill and lea,
Aud palms and cypresses swim o'er the verdurous sea.

V.

Thou, sultan of a harem of world-wives,
Robed in ethereal vesture! masculine
Spirit, that shed'st thine influence, and lives
Nature, formed from thy quintessence divine,
With thy reflected smiles thy consorts shine!
Thou god exalted on thy seat on high!
Yet of thy gorgeous honors nought is thine;
He who hath set thee there to king the sky,
Could hurl thy flaming pomp to dark nonentity!

VI.

Still further were the aloe mammelons
Of Bethlehem, hallowed by the mystic birth
Of him, the Lord plenipotent of Thrones,
Though but an outcast when he lived on earth;
Where he, the Guide, through alleys blind of death
To star-illumined immortality,
First drew in human shape his mortal breath,
Ere by his Passion's triumph in the sky
He gained for us a life that can for never die.

VII.

There still some youthful pastor feeds his flocks,
Perhaps with Jesse's blood within his veins,
With David's blue eyes, and his golden locks,
And on his harpischord plays sacred strains,
Or tunes his lyre to dulcet love's refrains;
While rings the tinkle of the wether's bell,
Leading the ewes to pasture through the lanes—
A sweet illusive sound that seems to tell
Of miraged homes in clouds where happy creatures dwell.

VIII.

For Gog had stopped his persecutions sore,
And tried to court the favor of the Jews;
And Christian proselytes oppressed no more,
Winning them back by means of saintly ruse,
And catering artfully unto their views:
He wished to pass for their Messiah King;
He strove to please, cajole them, and amuse;

And many of them ceased their murmuring,
Caught by the serpent's eye, and wounded by his sting.

IX

A man of genius, science, and of art,
Consummate was he, skilled in altar lore;
With brain capacious, and a little heart,
And of audacity a boundless store:
What is forbid he sought most to explore:
In alchemy profound, he had found out
How to convert to gold dross iron ore;
A wizard wondrous, he could by a shout
Make imps and ginns appear, and order them about.

X.

He juggled miracles; his touch could heal
The evil in the blood; his look could ope
From filmy eyes the scales that darkness seal;
The deaf, the dumb, the dwarf, who mow and mope,
The lame and crippled who on crutches grope,
Would walk away quite whole; and pain and ache
He numbed by necromancy; fear and hope,
Alternate he inspired, for he could make
The living senseless, and the dead to seem awake.

XI.

He caused an idol, of himself the mould
And likeness to be shaped; and in the court
Of his seraglio placed the imaged gold,
And from the cloud the sprite of lightning caught,
And life Pygmalic in the statue wrought;
And at the sound of sackbut, flute, and drum,

Blind worm of darkness, ordered all who thought
That he of Jewry and of Christendom
Was the expected Lord, to worship it should come.

XII.

And gangs of acolytes at the beat of drum
Fall on their faces in the dust before
The image, while the air spins with the hum
Of music, and the algum's swinging shower,
And multitudes collected to adore,
While beadles holding verges cry, "Lo! this
Is our god whom our humble prayers implore:
Tinkle the sistrum, and bow down, and kiss
His sacrosanctic feet with piety and bliss."

XIII.

And a voice from the automaton cries thus:
"Behold the day appointed is now come,
When I with man uncontumacious
Will make a covenant new. I will consume
No more the land, nor contrite nations doom
To pains and penalties; but I will write
My law upon their minds, and build my home
Within their hearts, their Lord of love and light,
And they shall be my people, and I their God of might."

XIV.

'Twas Ryno, Satan's proxy, hid within
The oracle, who through a tube that led
Up to its mouth, roared with cavernous din
A ghastly sound that struck their souls with dread,
So that none there dared then lift up the head—

Ryno, the accomplice of the Man of Sin,
High-Priest of Anti-Christ there worshipped,
Who of the Beast had the False Prophet been,
Determined that the Dragon earth for Hell should win.

XV.

Still more audacious and malignant grown,
Gog now conceives the horrible design
Within the Temple to usurp the Throne
Of living flame, essential soul divine,
And with its simulated lustre shine :
Hence he ordains a proclamation through
The tribes of Israel, that the inner shrine,
The Holy of Holies, in the veil of blue,
To all who faithful were would be exposed to view.

XVI.

Where they might Eloh in his glory see,
Where they must come, and incense burn to him,
At the Passover feast, and bend the knee,
And him invoke in a triumphant hymn,
As he rides on the wings of cherubim;
The paramour of pride is blasphemy.
The festal day is come to act this whim
Unsanctimonious; this profanity
Insensate and defiant against the Deity.

XVII.

The Abomination of Desolation sits
On the most holy place of all the earth,
And mocks at Goodness, with his scornful wits,
Shameful and sacrilegious, venting forth

Foul perfidies against celestial Worth,
Plenary Truth, and Grace ineffable,
And all embracing Love, provoked to wrath,
That Heaven should thus be parodied by Hell,
And on the Mercy Seat the Beast should dare to dwell.

XVIII.

Night as a ghost in sable stole had fled,
And all the stars, each called by his own name,
Had muster passed and sought repose in bed;
But seraphim and ministers of flame
Rise from their sky-roofed pallets and proclaim
The Adorable how good, in full-choired song
Hymning the day-spring o'er the land of Shem;
Then, stealing colors that to clouds belong,
Bourgeon the vernal year Judea's hills among.

XIX.

It was a lovely morn. The dews of spring
In rosy showers had rinsed the locks of Night;
Each twig, and blade, and tuft was blossoming,
Flushed into life by kisses of the light,
Till the gay sward with dangling bells was bright;
The air was redolent of cordial balm,
And touched the pulse that tingled with delight;
Boon nature chanted a thanksgiving psalm,
And all was tender mirth, bland joy, or dulcet calm.

XX.

For the Spring is an ever new Messiah,
That comes with tidings of reviving life
To elements that quicken and expire,

But never perish in the plastic strife
With benizons innumerable rife:
He wakes the embryons in their still graves laid
With March winds playing on their shrilly fife;
The germs start up, in mantling green arrayed,
So man shall rise again from the tomb's silent shade.

XXI.

And a kind nurse is Spring that tends the buds,
Sleeping in cradled cotton, and the May
With pearly buttons decks, and ruby studs,
Brushing the mildew from the blistered spray,
And charming canker and the blight away;
The midwife of all mothers, and she opes
The eyes of new-born creatures to the day,
When life with promise dawns, and joys, and hopes,
A floating dreamy land through which the infant gropes.

XXII.

Now frequent rainbows span the hills and dales,
Waking beneath them freshest odors, now
Through daphne copses fume the spicy gales,
And where the scented cones of lilacs blow,
Or swings the chalice from magnolia's bough:
Look where the flower-rain fell upon this bank;
It is enamelled with the gorgeous show
Of intermingled dyes, with beauty rank,
Matched by the glittering gems that every hedge-row prank.

XXIII.

The fruitful life is swelling in the sap,
And drinking sunshine: low the acacia bows

Its golden head, and willows water's flap,
And sweep their emeraldine beads in rows
Along the ripples; the pomegranate glows
With blushing lips, such as young virgins boast;
Bending the blue-eared rye the zephyr throws
Across the field a shadow like a ghost,
And plots of thyme are drowsed by bees, a swarming host.

XXIV.

Again the tonsured flamens singing throng,
Again the signal drum, and trumpet's blast
Announce the advent of the god they long
To see and honor. The purple veil is cast
Aside, and in the inner court they've passed,
Where in the shrine, between the cherubim,
Sits the blown mountebank. The crowd, aghast
At the electric nimbus in a rim
Round his head circumfused, bow down and worship him;

XXV.

Then their obsequious bodies prostrate throw,
And beat their temples fearful to upraise
Their looks, lest from the figure splendors glow,
And strike them blind with the terrific blaze,
But grovelling cry aloud:—"We dare not gaze!
Thy glory is too bright, but shine, thou sun!
And fill thy tabernacle with thy rays!
Our King on earth, our God in Heaven alone,
We hail thee, Shiloh, on thine everlasting throne!"

XXVI.

And from the shekinah responds a voice:—
"Who shall abide my presence, who shall stand
When I shall come, preceded by the noise
Of trumpets sounded by my angel band,
To judge the quick and dead throughout the land?
But now rejoice, O Zion! and break forth
In songs hilarious, for my strong right-hand
Shall lift thee to the skies! O shout with mirth,
For thy God shall be Lord and Priest, o'er all the earth!"

XXVII.

Sin paves the road for Ruin to ride on;
And vassal votaries with fetish fear,
Through the wild hurly-burly push where shone
The demiurgic light, formed to appear
A ring or aureole of luminous air.
But now two men in fetters are with force
Dragged by some officers, who the path clear
With blows of whips and staves, and threatenings coarse,
Shouting: "Make room, make room," with accents loud and hoarse.

XXVIII.

"Here is a patine of sweet frankincense
To offer to our god," then Ryno cried;
"And bend your stubborn knees, and show your sense
Of his high favor, who for ye have died,
Whose bigot fathers had him crucified!"
"Avaunt thee, imp of evil!" quick returned

Adoram, "and in midnight horrors hide!
Our fathers have the serpent always spurned,
And we will draw our steps from where his fire has
burned."

XXIX.

"That Thou wouldst rend the Heavens, and come
down,
And view man's wickedness, whose cup is full
Of vile abominations, from heel to crown
Whose flesh is rottenness; how monarchs rule
Thy people, slaughtered to amuse a fool,
How they scoff holiness their state to keep,
Where aping godhead sits the glutted ghoul!
Awake Thy sword! ah, shall it ever sleep?
The orphan calls to thee, and widows wail and weep!"

XXX.

Then Methulah, regarding sternly Gog,
Where, seated on the cherubs of the Ark,
He beamed in artificial fiery fog,
Thus vented his reproach: "Thou demon dark,
Sin's transmigrated earthly hierarch,
Hell has bestirred its dead thy ghost to meet,
They're marching hither cold, and stiff, and stark;
I see the shades of kings come forth to greet
Their fellow shade, I hear the pattering of their feet!"

XXXI.

"In thine heart thou hast said, 'I will ascend
To Heaven, I will exalt my throne above
The stars of God, and ministers I'll send

Furies and fiends through the world to rove,
With works of ill requiting acts of love;
I will climb up above the height of clouds,
Within the Mountain of the Lord I'll move;'
Yet shalt thou be brought down among the crowds
Of skeletons that sleep not, though in winding shrouds."

XXXII.

" How art thou fallen from thy proud estate,
Son of the morning, and the bright day spring!
How are the nations in their joy elate,
That thou are low? and they triumphant sing,
'Was this the man, this filthy, festering thing,
That shook the kingdoms, and a desert made
Along his path, plundering and murdering,
Who lieth infamous among the dead,
With swarming worms that crawl around his rotting head?"'

XXXIII.

" Off with his head!" screamed Ryno, when the sound
Was heard of thunder, and the Temple rocked,
And the earth heaved beneath, and split the ground;
And they who had the glory of Goodness mocked
With terror and alarm were sudden shocked;
The roof fell in with crackle loud, and down
Shattered the beams and rafters where had flocked
The idolaters, mid stour and debris thrown;
But when they upward looked the kindling zenith shone

XXXIV.

With war's resplendent pomp and panoply;
And martial armies issued from Heaven's gate,
Mounted on steeds that through the cloud-drifts fly,
And at their head upon a White Horse sat
"Faithful and True," the messenger of Fate!
His eyes are flashing as a coal of fire,
With pride of conscious strength godlike sedate,
A vesture dipped in blood his limbs attire,
And golden diadems he wears in triple tier;

XXXV.

And on his garment written is a name,
"The King of Kings, and of all Lords the Lord,"
He who had once been sore reviled with shame,
While a mere man, but now the exalted "Word,
In whom is Life!" the two-edged cutting sword,
The flaming brand and thunderbolt of Truth,
Victorious o'er imposters and the horde
Of lying prophets, darts from out his mouth,
And sceptres, croziers smites, crowns, mitres without ruth:

XXXVI.

And him attended Michael, the great prince,
Equipped with Medusean ægis shield,
The captain of the armed sabaoth since
His dread encounter in the battle field
With Satan, when the fiend did to him yield,
And, howling, fled to hide his shame in Hell:
Now with his lance, invincible to wield,
He standeth up for downcast Israel,
Strong as a garrisoned and rock-bound citadel.

XXXVII.

The hiss of rushing wings inflames the air
With storms meteorous, a dance of fire:
As when the northeast wind hath wrapped the sphere
In gloom, and drives along the billow's spire,
And sudden Thrascias wakes with maddened ire
Contending waves on waves opposing pour
Their foaming legions, in confusion dire;
If then the sun look from his ebon tower,
A crested spray-bow sits each surge, an Iris shower.

XXXVIII.

And in the blazing sun an Angel stood,
And louder than the raging tempest cried:
"Come all ye vultures, with your hideous brood,
From Nebo's scarped pile, and Sinai's side,
To Jordan's banks, and the Dead Sea's dull tide,
To feast on flesh of kings and mighty men;
Come all ye ravens swift from deserts wide,
From Cushite islands and the Tyrian main,
A banquet waits for you of steeds and heroes slain."

XXXIX.

"Thy 'Mene Tekel''s writ by God's own hand,
Who is against thee, Gog, and thy lewd slaves;
A mound of bones shall be thy ravaged land,
Thy council chambers be possessed by graves,
And Death his simoom shadow wave where waves
Thy cruel ensign! an astonishment,
A hissing shall become thy wizard knaves,
Star-gazing, and plagues after them be sent,
And all the beauty of thy excellence be rent!"

XL.

"Thy harlots, wives, and concubines I'll smite
With scab upon the crown of each one's head;
And boils shall on their painted beauty light,
Burning instead of blooming; and thy bed
Shall be a sty polluted by the dead;
The ghosts of all thy victims round thee fly,
And thy dirge sing thy martial chants instead!
Hermon shall weep no more, nor Lebanon cry,
Nor Zion, garbed in ashes, crouch in dust and sigh!"

XLI.

Then swift the war descends with horrent sheen;
More fervid glows the corruscating light
From chariot wheels that burn the hyaline,
And glittering blades that silver streamers pight,
Like moonbeams rippling on the tide at night;
Through thunders rolling move the cohorts blest,
Through lightnings flashing Jesus' feet alight,
And, whence he had ascended, touch the crest
Of Olivet, and cleave its centre where they pressed,

XLII.

Delving a valley from the south to north,
And the marquees demolishing and tents,
Where camped the ethnic legions; thence spread forth
Earthquakes their havoc, fracturing monuments,
Domes, steeples, towers, and pinnacles to rents
Through the death-stricken, terror-quailing land;
Fowls of the air scream out their loud laments,
Beasts of the field are faint, and cannot stand,
And fishes of the sea are cast upon the strand.

XLIII.

The forked leven struck the brasted hill,
And a rain fell of brimstone, hail, and fire,
A stream of horror into Kedron's rill,
Scathing the army with combustion dire,
Brent as a hecatomb upon a pyre;
The magazines exploded through the smoke
Scattering pavilions in the sanguine mire,
And howitzers, guns, wains, and litters broke,
To comminuted fragments crashed of slags and coke.

XLIV.

Smothered with dust and blinded with thick clouds
Of ashes, like a storm of snow at night,
Against each other the battalious crowds
Rise with implacable but deceptive spite;
For frantic was their unpercipient sight:
And in the darkling fray was Ryno slain,
And Gog was wounded in the desperate fight;
No more invulnerable, and died in pain,
Hurling defiance, hate, and unsubdued disdain.

XLV.

Their souls for condign punishment to Hell
Were cast at once, by sentence just their doom,
Ere final judgment, there in chains to dwell,
The beast and the False Prophet in the tomb
Of black Gehenna's escharotic spume,
To antidate the death-coil of the snake,
The death-throes when their tenuous frames consume,

With the fireworm's forestalling sting to ache,
And only after penance done to pardon wake.

XLVI.

Ephemeral flowers of summer! still we strive
For gilded cares, and yearn that fame consort
Our living name when we have ceased to live;
A plaster cast shall from thy face be wrought,
When thy renown posthumous slanders rot!
But guilt that blossoms will not ripen seed,
The thwarted sapling grows a monstrous sport,
On foulest soil springs up the rankest weed,
And muggy airs the rust in nubile Ceres breed.

XLVII.

Full long the combat raged, and dire the slaughter
Along the slopes and hummocks, far and near;
The corpses filled and choked up Kedron's water,
Running with foamy gore, a shamble where
The wounded and the dying mingled were;
A pile that heaped the valley newly made,
And the whole precincts of the sepulchre,
Where of the Hebrew race in peace are laid
After a troublous life so many of the dead.

XLVIII.

A sacrifice inexpiable makes
The Lord at Bosrah, where the Mongols lay
As thick as locusts; the land reels and shakes,
Caverns of pitch burst open to the day,
Heaving their floppy billows, and display
A lake bituminous, that overflows

And runs in ancient moraines on its way
Through bluffs and gulches, whence the dust that blows,
With flakes of sulphur laden, scorches where it goes.

XLIX.

The vast battalions suffocated fall,
And perish by the flames; in boiling blood
The mountains melt; through the dun air the call
Is heard of angels, as the lava flood
And rocks they throw with repercussing thud;
The sun, eclipsed, rolls dead, a ball of jet,
A darkened halo, like a widow's hood,
Wimples the moon, and asteroids beset
The pyrotechnic skies and dusky ruin threat.

L.

This is the day of the Lord God of Hosts—
His day of vengeance! drunk the sword shall be
With blood; the field shall shriek with wounded ghosts!
Take Balm of Gilead for thy malady,
Daughter of Babel! drastic scammony
And senna shall not purge thy murder clean,
Nor hellebore thy madness! wail and cry,
And curse thee that thou ever born hadst been!
Thine ulcer shall not heal, but fret and fester green.

LI.

An everlasting monument of wrath,
A fire unfueled burns there night and day,
Tenacious, that henceforth there is no path

Through which the nomade tribes may find their way:
The Arab on its verge looks with dismay
On smouldering fumes and intermittent flame,
And dares not venture, but will kneel and pray;
And shudders with disgust, and fear, and shame,
As the charred skulls he sees, and worms consuming them.

LII.

Of those who fugitive escaped the sword
The greater part were seized with pestilence;
For fevers fluttering in the air were stored,
With subtle venom's fierce maleficence;
The flesh fell daily off from corpulence,
And maculated gangrene sloughed the hide;
Within their caverned sockets shrunk the sense
Of vision dark; tongues schirrous no more lied;
And thus they wasted slow away, until they died.

LIII.

The same disease the camel, horse, and mule,
The ass, and sheep, and cattle sapped and killed:
The choughs, and gledes, and eagles feasted full;
Their maws the panther and the jackal filled,
And gorged and glutted freely, as they willed;
Picking the brains of heroes and of kings,
Crunching the bones with bloody marrow spilled,
And champing gristle, nerves, and sinew-strings;
And blow-flies swarmed, and left their loathsome festerings.

LIV.

"Great Pan is dead" and buried in his grave,
A tenant of the fox and blind mole's home,
In Hammon vale, east of the Dead Sea's wave,
With thousands of his people round his tomb,
Where they await in dust the trump of doom.
The caravans from Edom pass the spot,
But speak not, as with hurried step they roam
Past where the tabooed relics moldering rot,
So much they dread his name, and fear his horrid lot.

LV.

His voice they think they hear in all the sounds
Of the weird wilderness, in the shrill burr
The locust trills, monotonous rebounds,
And droning chirm of insects, in the stir
Of waving grasses, and the rumbling whirr
Of dust tornadoes on the asphaltic coasts;
And that dead silence of the desert air,
That awed the night-watch of the patriarch's posts,
Brought howls and moanings to them from the land of ghosts.

LVI.

So thorough was the rout, and so complete
The irreparable ruin, few returned
To their own ingles, after their defeat,
Bearing the spores of plagues their blood that burned
Boils and carbuncles, till their lives they spurned;
For the imposthume foul their vitals ate;

And northern snows and tropic sunshine learned
Their sad disasters, and the fearful fate
That had whelmed Gog in the vale of Jehosaphat.

LVII.

"Now, Michael, go with these embodied hosts,
And chain the King of Terror and of Hell,
That for a thousand years o'er only ghosts
In Hades he may reign, his pride to quell—
Informidable, impuissant to rebel:
So he no more may prowl upon the earth,
And, entering men, their souls with fury swell
To violate God's altar, and man's hearth,
As late he demonized the sultan of the north."

LVIII.

So ordered the Messiah, and so obeyed
The Virtue militant, with his squadrons bright,
Succinct in arms of heavenly temper made,
With beauty's terrors winged, that through the night
Blaze irresistible, and the fiends affright:
No thought of battle entered Satan's mind;
He yielded, but with hard averse despite,
And stern, though helpless, him they sullen bind,
Loaded with ponderous chains, that round his body wind,

LIX.

Like a huge hydra, tangled round his limbs,
And crushing with their gordian knots his head;
While flaming gurge stupendous o'er him climbs,
With boiling smoke of sweeping torment spread,

For a millennium hence to be his bed:
Then with a golden key the massive door
Of triple adamant they locked, and sped
Through vacuous fields of air, a dismal moor
To life insuperable—a sea without a shore.

LX.

As sung the morning stars when rose this earth
From chaos, so the sons of Heaven sing
The joyful tidings of her second birth,
And Eden lost regained, till voices ring
With jubilates to the Almighty King,
Protector, and to His victorious Son,
From the rich Fount of Love the flowing spring:
"Righteous Thy judgments are on Babylon—
The Scarlet Whore that sat on earth's imperial throne!"

LXI.

"The king of swords is smitten by the sword,
By death he's slain who 'gainst the living fought;
The draff of worms become who was the lord
Of pomp and grandeur; the false Prophet's caught
By his own lie; the god is turned to nought;
The lecher to the sting of lust is doomed;
The thief before the leet of sessions brought;
The murderer in a living grave is tombed
Till in Hell's caldron blood for blood is all consumed."

LXII.

"The enchanter's bitten by his own charmed snake;
The cruel hunter by his hounds is torn;

Who dreamed of glory, now in dole awake,
Discrowned, and of his gilded gewgaws shorn,
Is dust and loathsome garbage! Hence to mourn
His heinous sins, the red-ignited coal,
Whose ash consumes not, but will ever burn,
Tortures with branding cautery his soul,
Till the archangel's trump shall call Death's muster roll."

LXIII.

"Babylon is fallen, fallen, and become
An Ichabod, the nest where roosts the owl,
And broods o'er ruins and the rotting tomb;
There the hyena and the tiger prowl,
And hairy satyrs to their fellows howl;
Where stood her palace courts there dragons breed,
And crawl o'er lichened columns serpents foul;
Cormorants in her grass-grown fortress feed,
And in the stagnant ditches sheds the toad her seed."

LXIV.

"As high uplifted as she was with pride,
Low is she sunk in ignominious shame:
'I am a Queen, above Queens magnified,'
She flaunting said, 'and glorious is my name!
And the whole earth is shadowed by my fame!
I am no widow and shall see no sorrow,
And who shall dare my wantonness to blame?
From every hour some new delight I'll borrow'—
But judgment came with death, and mourning in the morrow."

LXV.

"Silence usurps her alabaster halls,
No rustic game nor merry wake is there;
No laugh of masque nor chant of madrigals;
No harper, piper, and no trumpeter!
There is a shudder in the very air,
As though the wind were struck with leprosy,
And the ground smells of mold of sepulchre;
No harvest-home nor vintage song there be;
No village-roundel dance beneath the linden tree."

LXVI.

"No more the candles at her windows shine,
Nor grinds the mill-stone corn for food of man,
Dumb is the camel's growl, the low of kine,
Dried is the rill that through the meadow ran,
And dulcet pleasure's turned to bitter bane;
No tender swain woes there his bashful bride,
Nor works at any craft the artisan,
No princely merchants in her marts abide;
But Time, mid moldering walls croons requiems
over pride."

THE MILLENNIUM.

CANTO VIII.

I.

OVER his saints the Prince in his Beauty reigns,
Anointed King, and sits upon the throne
Of the Messiah, and irrepressible gains
Triumphs o'er Death and Satan; not alone,
But with his twelve Apostles, each upon
A chair of honor, placed on either hand,
As gyre the planets round their central sun;
And round the regent powers disciples stand,
Thick as the shells are strewn on Cooandilla's strand.

II.

Then thus in cadence sweet that seems a hymn
Attuned in Paradise, though dire the words,
Yet not in anger, "Go, ye cherubim,
Armed with the terror of your flaming swords,
And slay of aggravated crime the hordes;
Out of my vineyard root what weeds offend,
Gog's servile slaves, and proud imperious lords,
So that of his plantations there be end;
But blind the leven that no good man's house it rend."

III.

In threatening equipage the angels start,
By carnal organs unperceived, though seen
By incorporeal instincts, Death's own dart,
Poising, a brand that waves with lightning's sheen,
No rock so hard could dint its edge so keen;
Through the cloud-isles of air a rushing storm,
Sliding as shadows over hillocks green,
Treading the sward, yet crushing not a worm,
And wading through the sea whereon no ripples form.

IV.

No solid frame compact of thews and bones
Had they, but vehicles of essence through,
That glistered like the glow of precious stones,
And shadows luminous around them threw;
But when on their transparence morning drew
His scarf of sprinkled fire incentive burned,
As when he stamps his signet on the dew;
And as their glossy pens the azure spurned,
A blaze of emerald eyes to glistening sunbeams turned.

V.

They enter in the palace bathed in light,
In honor of the birth of the king's son,
The first-born of his loins, and him they smite,
And his sire sitting on his ivory throne,
And the queen in her gay pavilion,
Glad mother of an hour; who, as the gales
From rose-bud blooms her bosom lying on

She breathes, with flutter strange, the pest inhales,
And flushes, moans, and gasps, and in death's rigor
pales.

VI.

They penetrate unknown within the hall,
Where gulls the senate the sleek orator,
And touch his lips that drop with honeyed gall,
The malefactor's opiate spiced with myrhh,
Whose heart is treason's skilled artificer,
And straight the traitor swoons and staggering dies:
Inside the minster's furbished theatre,
And as the preacher gospel sells and buys
Mammon, asphyxiate the throat that utters lies.

VII.

The lovely Edith figures at the ball,
In masquerade costume, a sprightly fay,
For 'tis the season of the carnival:
A will-o'-wisp was she that led astray
Impassioned hearts, the theme of laureate's lay;
And as the basilisk from her blue eye
Destruction deals on whom its glance survey,
She sudden shrieks, and the shrill piercing cry
Tolls her own knell of bliss from thoughts of too
much joy.

VIII.

A child is lying on its mother's lap,
And from the coral of her breast sucks life,
As draws a lily from its stem the sap:
The mother 's slaughtered by a phantom knife,

And is become of Death the phantom wife;
The child has milked the last drop it shall drain,
It beats the nipple with infantile strife,
And chides, and tries to coax the breast again,
Then falls convulsed, for it has swallowed mortal bane.

IX.

The money lender, piling up his heaps,
The scrivener at his ledger, casting up
False figured wealth; the spendthrift, as he sweeps
Gold into dust; the drunkard at his cup,
As he the essence of Hell's fire would sup;
The steward, as he rifles manor deeds;
The libertine, to joys effete the dupe;
The civet lover, as his suit he pleads:
The tares and kidlock, these from corn the gleaner weeds.

X.

The gambler, who has staked his all, and lost
The unlucky throw, with only time to say
"O treacherous fate!" when he himself is tost,
A wrecked waif, stranded on perdition's way,
With deathful shame the forfeiture to pay;
The assassin, who in ghost-light ambush lain,
Is waiting secret there his friend to slay;
The swindler, as he snatches at his gain;
By brands intangible inevitably are slain.

XI.

The workshop, office, laboratory and mill,
The barracks, alms-house, hospital, the jail,

Sounds of despair and lamentation fill;
For everywhere doth ashen doom prevail,
And skill and knowledge are of no avail;
Belligerent armies in their burial field,
Frigates and yachts on peace or war that sail,
Who hold the plow, or who the mattock wield;
The citadel of life all at the summons yield.

XII.

Now Israel looks on him whom she did pierce,
And mourns for him as for an only son,
And weeps disconsolate, sad, wild, and fierce,
That she had him reviled and spat upon,
More splendent now than feigned Hyperion;
Her hymn of faith no more a dirge of woes,
But as the stars when is eclipsed the sun
Peer out at noon, so high uplifted rose
Her pride, although her head with self reproaches bows.

XIII.

"O, comfort ye, my people! for ye are
Pardoned," cried Jesus to the afflicted race,
Now penitent; "O comfort ye, whose war
Is ended! Wake, O wake, with shining face,
Put on of snowy lawn the robes of grace,
Thy brows with oak instead of cypress deck,
And round thy loins the zone of strength enlace;
Thy bonds and fetters loosen from thy neck,
And rise thee, Zion's daughter, rise thee from thy wreck!"

XIV.

Then answered Methulah, and all the Jews
Assembled there, "Hosannah to our King!
The Lord Our Righteousness, whom we refuse,
No longer faithless. Strike the golden string,
And let the dulcimer with praises ring,
Let cymbals clang, the clamor of our joys,
O welcome him, for he doth victory bring!
Then let us wear him in our memories,
A sign upon the hands, frontlets between the eyes."

XV.

"O that we could the guilty past discharge
As a dishonest servant. But to us
The morning star on the horizon's marge
Thou art, that from the valley nebulous
Calls the dead light to rise all glorious.
Our arm was broken, thou didst bind it up;
Our horn cut off, with chaplets beauteous
Of living love and of immortal hope
Our temples crown, and give us joy's o'erflowing cup."

XVI.

"Honored still more than Judah's prince will be
Jesus, our great Deliverer, in whose face
Beams reconciliated amity,
The earnest of eternal peace and grace,
And whose forgiving arms his foes embrace:
The herald of sweet charities to men,
Thou in our dolor art the voice that says,
'O come, all ye who are with care and pain
Laden, and ye shall rest from heavy fardels gain.'"

XVII.

"O who hath heard or who hath seen such things!
Shall Palestine bring forth within a day
A nation? Yes, for on her sufferings
Shiloh took pity, and doth now repay
Her double for her sorrow and dismay.
The grace of glorious Love abides with thee,
And not the Terror that delights to slay;
Gentiles shall come the Lord of Life to see,
And kings shall wait in state upon his majesty."

XVIII.

Yes, Jesus is Messiah in their esteem,
And when they speak of him they think of all
That in a man a paragon we deem,
The milk of Heaven without earthly gall;
And hence, because so good, divine him call;
The filial image of that Love and Grace,
Transcendently expressed celestial
In plenitude only on his Father's face,
But of the glory's train the trailing skirts they trace.

XIX.

When cauterises shame the ulcered heart,
Prayer is the panacea of penitence,
The cooling cerate mollifying smart;
The rose of care, Golconda's excellence,
The fragrant smoke of aloes frankinsence;
Like those fair worlds which only shine at night,
Then through the gloom that shadows soul and sense
Glimmer sweet thoughts whose lustre is the light
Of Heaven's sun-burst of Love, the Fountain of Delight.

XX.

Now companies of shipping hail the shore,
Bringing the seed of Abraham from afar,
Wherever, bruised and beaten, peeled and sore,
Their scattered remnants persecuted are,
A people crushed and trodden down by war;
In vessels swift they fly, as through the clouds
The flocks of swallows for the southern star,
Mindful of seasons, steer, or storks in crowds
Sail for their homes when skies the brumal Scorpion shrouds.

XXI.

Leviathans, with wings and iron feet,
From British Thule upon thy children wait,
And galleons, hearts of oak, the ocean fleet
With their gold and their silver for a freight,
Them to their promised empire to translate;
Where foreign artisans build up their walls,
In mansions lodged in oriental state,
When kings from Congo shall frequent their halls,
And saints from Columkill meet at their festivals.

XXII.

Now traverse caravans the wilderness,
And trains of dromedaries and zebras wend
Through tunneled oceans, convoys numberless;
The roads are filled with wagons without end,
And pendulous fleets aerial billows rend;
All hasting on towards Jerusalem,
With unconstrained fealty to bend

To their Messiah, with the diadem
Of Heaven crowned on earth, and now revered by them.

XXIII.

New homes are founded, cities are restored
Long desolate in ruins, and the land,
For centuries fallowed by the fire and sword,
Is plowed and planted; and again shall stand
Another Temple, raised without a hand,
Irradiated with devotion's flame;
And widowed Zion, at her Lord's command,
Espoused, shall be baptized, and take his name,
"Jehovah Shammah," no more earth's prodigious shame.

XXIV.

The calumet is smoked, for men are wise;
They sow their glebe with corn, and trail the vine,
And Israel Beulah blooms a Paradise;
Their curds the peasants eat, and drink their wine,
And teach their gladness to the mandolin;
The mountain flows with milk, and drops the mead
Manna and balsam, and in lovesome twine,
With wreaths of roses bound around the head,
The buxom damsels dance beneath the teil-tree's shade

XXV.

"Soft as the whisper of the flowing tide
That babbles secrets to the sands beneath,
The night winds through the musk geraniums glide,
And lilies that enshrine Eve's virgin breath,
Sweet as the consciousness of peace in death.
Sleep, my betrothed, and of Elysium dream,

And murmur smiles that rosy kisses wreath!
Stars kiss their sisters, dipping in the stream,
From oak to elm the fire-fly's twinkling lanterns gleam."

XXVI.

"Awake, my love, my fairest, come away!
For lo! the winter's past, the rain is gone,
And the green lap of earth spring flowers array
With an embroidered apron. Spruce and boon,
Rise from thy couch with all thy bravery on!
The time of singing birds, sweet love, is come;
I hear them choiring spousals, dearest one!
The turtles bill and coo, the herons boom,
And, borne on wings of song, larks pierce the star-thatched dome."

XXVII.

"Noiseless and silent as the falling dew,
Step on the beds of spice, and come to me,
And I will spread my banner over you
In Nature's boudoir and young nursery!
Oh! come and view how shoots the henna tree,
How the vine-bloom embalms the prime of May,
How king-cups dance to the wind's minstrelsy;
How smells the ambrosia of the new-mown hay!
Come with thy dove's eyes, love, and bring with thee the day."

XXVIII.

And often ministers of grace descend
Swift through the darkness as an aerolite,
Yet drop as soft as feather's down, and wend
The dingles, with perennial flowers bright,

Celestial telegraphs from Heaven's height
To earth become as Heaven, so pure and fair;
The angelus salutes the dawn of night,
The break of morning and the noontide air,
And voices in the sky join in the complin prayer.

XXIX.

Now glorified immortals rule in peace,
And judge mankind: no martial trump is heard
All cries of strife and shouts of anger cease,;
But the bee's hum, and chirp of tuneful bird,
The bleat of sheep, and lowing of the herd
Attest the rural concord; hammers clang
No more on anvils forging spear or sword;
No deadly thunders from the cannons bang,
No more the earth is torn by war's infuriate fang.

XXX.

Mad Discord of his red torch is disarmed;
By Chastity the satyr Lust is tamed,
The thyrsus of blown Bacchus drunk is charmed
By Virtue mild and comely; now is shamed
Greed but to own the useless pelf he claimed;
Corroding rusts the armor on the ground,
The banner rots that erst in battle flamed,
And falchions with green myrtle boughs are bound,
No longer taught to kill—no longer taught to wound.

XXXI.

The pomp of military state is past;
The men-o'-war are rigged in argosies,
Chartered with trade, that binds the nations fast

In brotherhood of love; no longer flies
The viking on his odious embassies;
And, that worst scourge of cruel avarice,
No more the slaver on its errand hies;
But mission ships, that bear the Savior's kiss,
Now visit tropic isles, and pagans call to bliss.

XXXII.

No Alabamas, built by envious hands,
And hostile hearts, friends spurious and untrue,
And manned by pirates, not by patriot bands,
The loathsome spawn of crime's imbruted crew,
As stealthily hyenas fawns pursue,
Pounce on their prey, no war accoutred foe
In equal fight, but unarmed brethren, who
Are helpless to resist—till oceans grow
A howling wilderness, a burning hell of woe.

XXXIII.

Come down from thy false glory and thy pride,
Daughter of Mammon, sitting by the sea!
Thy garments are in blood of Gambia dyed,
Thy cauls, thy tires, thy silken broidery,
Thy chains, thy rings, all beauty's treasury;
The swaddling of thy babes, thy bride's white wreath,
The shroud that laps thy dead, by slavery
Are tiger-spotted; hardness shadoweth
With Egypt's plague thy heart for Egypt's sin of death.

XXXIV.

The harvest of the ocean is thy wealth,
Thy navies plough its ridges, and thou art

The Gipsy Queen of trade, by cruel stealth
Of sinews, thews and muscle, brain and heart,
With pilfered toggery and trinkets smart,
A harlot tricked in meretricious gaud!
Thou donkey drawing Dizzy's cabbage-cart!
Crawl on thy knees in mud, thou pimping bawd,
And prostitute thy soul to some rich tory lord!

XXXV.

As in primeval days before the flood
The brawny patriarchs lived a thousand years,
So now so healthy beats the vigorous blood
The human being but a youth appears,
Although a century old; and the sire rears
His children's offspring, generations born
To tenth descendant's progeny, nor fears
That his posterity will be forlorn,
For autumn piles the barn, and plenty pours her horn.

XXXVI.

"In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread
Till thou return unto the ground!" Such was
The primal curse for sin; but now, instead
Of thorns and thistles, barley springs and grass,
And the rocks turn to silver, gold, and brass;
Fountains of oil down trickle bleak hillside,
Through prairies and savannahs freshets pass;
The barren plateau drinks the limpid tide,
And through the arid steppe irriguous runnels glide.

XXXVII.

The mirage has become a real lake,
The sand fused into water; navies sail

Where late, on bitter shrubs and thorny brake,
The wild ass grazed; swift as the simoom gale,
Nations migrate along the iron rail,
Where the keen ounce pursued his flying prey,
Or fiercer Bedouin tracked the pilgrim's trail;
And lightnings, tamed and taught, man's thoughts convey
Down through the depths of night, up through the realms of day.

XXXVIII.

The desert shall rejoice, and like the rose
Blossom with pampered verdure; lofty trees,
The sainted cedar that on Lebanon grows,
The martial oak that Bashan canopies,
Enrich the waste with summer draperies;
And Sharon's excellence, her pasture green,
Where the ox battens on the clover leas,
And camels browse the climbing caper-bean,
On tawny moss shall be, and spongy marish seen.

XXXIX.

Now rises in the Temple's ground a spring,
And flows to either sea, and on its bank
Are virent groves, which at all seasons bring
Forth their new clusters, in luxuriance rank,
Sabean balsam bearing, that who drank
Forthwith were cured of the sore moil of care,
And never back to nocent error sank;
For healing of the nations everywhere,
Whose leaves shall never fade, but fresh forever are.

XL.

The same tree once within the garden grew
Of Eden, ere the Serpent there was seen,
Whose branches bourgeon with corollas blue,
Apples of gold, and foliage always green,
Of the whole sylvan nymphs the stately queen;
And whose taste immortality imparted
To all who dared to eat; and had Eve been
Less vain and credulous, and bolder hearted,
With life that never dies she might have never parted.

XLI.

The virtue of the river that runs east
The sickness purges of the salt Dead Sea,
And life its tide ferments like boiling yeast;
Where'er its waves touch, an infinity
Of finned and scaly tribes are found to be;
And fishermen now stand on En-eglaim,
Along the coast as far as En-gedi,
And spread their nets where erst Death's hideous name
Divulged the curse of God, and man's opprobrious shame.

XLII.

Throughout the earth the effulgence of the moon
Is bright as musky moss-rose summer's sun,
And the sun's lustre as seven suns in June,
Their melted bullion clarified to one
Metallic splendor the whole world upon;
Yet are the luminaries put to shame,
And dim before the glory of God's Son,
Whose sceptre in his Father's Holy Name
Rules Zion, that needs not the moon's light, nor sun's flame.

XLIII.

When man was savage, if the thunder growled
He hid his face in dust, and thought the fire
An angry god, who for a victim howled,
And sacrificed his first-born on the pyre;
For ignorance of cruelty is sire.
Then slave of all the elements; but now
Become their master, they at his desire
Serve his best needs, and to his orders bow,
And Hermes' peristrephic rod on him bestow.

XLIV.

For knowledge he has gained, and knowledge is
Not only power, but virtue, love, and joy;
And perfect science is but perfect bliss,
Since God is wisdom. Till his mental eye
Be oped, man is a child of misery;
A pupil at great Nature's normal school,
The heart but acts just as the soul doth see;
If unenlightened, he's a knave or fool!
But if the vision's clear, he's good and beautiful!

XLV.

A league of friendship binds the beasts: the Lord
Will break the murderous gun, and shaft, and bow;
To plowshares beaten is the rusty sword,
Nor fears the timid brute his ravenous foe;
The grizzly bear shall feed beside the cow,
No more the wolf the gentle lambkin slay,
The leopard round the kid shall but and bow,
And a boy with a string of flowers in play
The calf and lion yoked together lead away.

XLVI.

A weanling babe shall of the tiger make
His merry playmate, and its brinded neck
Pet and caress, and no harm from him take,
And it shall come and frolic at his beck;
Hawks at the bread crumbs in his hands shall peck;
For Peace his ordinance on them hath laid,
That they should love each other for love's sake;
No more the adder, springing from his bed
Of flowers, stings man's heel, man's seed has crushed his head.

XLVII.

With his disciples Jesus breaks the bread,
And drinks the wine, as he had promised them
That, in his Kingdom, after he were dead,
Together they should feast: Jerusalem
Rejoices, and her scribes no more condemn
The pilot who the human soul through death
Had to its haven steered with guiding helm;
The first of men who had breathed undying breath,
And worn Life's golden crown, and everlasting wreath.

XLVIII.

And living men then angels' food partake,
The bread, by sin unleavened, from the Tree
Of Life Eternal, and the dead awake
Banquet on manna, and delighted see
The pomp inordinate of majesty
In nature round them; and their voices raise
In honor of the Lamb the melody

Of sounds flute-tongued, and bold, heroic lays
On Zion's walls "Salvation," and her portals "Praise.

XLIX.

And as they pray responsive Love shall come
Before they call him, and their prayers will hear
While yet they speak them; overhead the dome
Reflecting as a glass through lucent air
The happy face of Paradise, that Care
Laughs like a heart at ease; and man shall then
Be reinstated in the image fair
Of Eden's innocence, a denizen
Of earth, to be enrolled in Heaven a citizen.

L.

The inhabitants of sinless earth will be
With Heaven's guileless tenants reconciled,
And all things gathered in an unity
Under the Son of God; then men who died,
But now are living, shall sit side by side
With men who never died, and ne'er will die;
Not in ideal vision glorified,
But in the fullness of reality,
And dwell together in harmonious amity.

THE FEAST OF LOVE.

CANTO IX.

I.

THE annual Feast of Love was close at hand,
The chief of the Millennial Festivals,
And pilgrim devotees from every land
In hood and baldrick flocked to Salem's walls;
And kings, and priests, and sages filled her halls,
Come to descry the glory of the Lord,
And worship at His Temple. Booths and stalls,
Tents, lodges, wigwams hold the mingled horde,
And wen and wart the hills, and tubercle the sward.

II.

The paths and by-ways round Jerusalem
Are diapered with throngs; the city's streets,
And lanes and alleys that the suburbs hem,
Broidered with numbers; here the Caffir meets
The Scandinavian, the Peruvian greets
The sombre Spaniard or the swarthy Moor;
To nooks remote the bustling crowd retreats,
To gardens, orchards, vineyards on they pour,
For all the burghs are full, and can contain no more.

III.

The road from Joppa is a moving march
Of camels, mules, and horses, jingling bells
Inscribed with "Holiness," in eager search
Of the pure Spring of Life in Zion's wells,
Whose flood the Fountain of Jouvence excels;
The harbor with its bristling anchored fleet
Appears alive with masts, and spars, and sails,
And boats with loads of passengers replete,
Who press the shore to tread with reverential feet.

IV.

And in the sandy cove a motley crew
Is gathered; some prostrated on their knees
On the bare rock, to thank the Lord anew
For their deliverance from the stormy seas,
Ejaculating texts from homilies;
While others that the Holy Land they see,
Enraptured, tell their beaded rosaries,
Or chant a canticle with pious glee,
Or prayer recite from some canonic liturgy.

V.

Hail hallowed spot! the Home of Charity!
Here Dorcas dwelt, and spun, and wove, and sewed,
And toiled, and prayed, that clothed the nude might be,
The hungry filled, then died by sickness bowed,
And rosemary is scattered on her shroud.
Orphans of sorrow, martyrs of distress!
She is not dead: the love that in her glowed

Still burns to solace human wretchedness,
And Dorcas lives again the sick and poor to bless.

VI.

The eve before this splendrous festival,
Under the umbrage cool of stately palms,
And cedar's awning, whence around were tall
Trellised alcoves, sun-proof, and leafy holms,
Imbrowned by autumn's aromatic balms,
Sat Methulah, with Adoram and a young
Neophyte, where the Master mid alarms,
When living in the flesh, had passed that long
Night of cold bloody sweats, in spite of suffering strong.

VII.

The winds had bid "good night," and gone to sleep,
And all was hushed, except the drowsy hum
Of some swinkt thrifty bees, that in the deep
Brugmansia's bells the floury pollen scum,
The last load of their honeyed harvest home;
And now they're silent. Past the Kedron's rill,
Where the gilt pinnacles of the Temple loom,
A glimpse of white-frocked boys the altars fill
With guirlandes, and the lamps light round Moriah's Hill.

VIII.

In hoar-frost moonshine swims the camphire grove;
What seems an aftermath of snowy bloom
The almond glitters; glancing sparkles move
Along the carob's edge, and mount to illume
Their heads with crowns of diamonds; where through gloom

Of massive foliage vistas open, there
On feathery tamarisks and sprigs of broom
Festoons of lustres hang, and starlets glare
Thick on the melia spray, and silver buds appear.

IX.

"How perfect is the calm! Not the least breath
Trembles a leaf of all the trees around,
The air is still as is a dream in death,
Yet how much joy doth everywhere abound,
And how much life in every atom 's found;
Almost the rock-rose opening might be heard,
Or petal dropping on the dusty ground;
Dumb is the insect, reptile, and the bird,
Yet animated seems the sky, with voices stirred."

X.

So spake the acolyte, and his Teacher thus:
"The life pulsating of infinity!
Yes, from those realms transcendent speak to us
Ethereal voices; the illimitable sky
Is full of all blest things that cannot die:
That truth, repeated by innumerous lungs,
Is shouted from the sumless orbs on high
In sweet communion by aerial tongues,
Viewless, and unrevealed, but by responsive songs."

XI.

"Where'er there space God's ministers are there;
And often when ye think it is the wind,
Soft footsteps printless tread the velvet air,
On countless missions sent to serve mankind;

The elements to loosen or to bind;
To seek the prisoner in his dark abode,
Perhaps some lost sheep mid the goats to find,
Or through the constellations pave the road,
By which blest saints may ride triumphant to their God."

XII.

"How silently the stars steal out to shine!"
Remarked the Rabbi. "Yet how brightly glow
Their tapers through the windowed hyaline
Of Heaven's homes, that on the earth below
The mansions men may see where they shall go;"
The priest replied: "The lighted lamps await
The anniversary of some festal show,
Such as with welcome will illuminate
All who have ever lived in love regenerate."

XIII.

"As in that 'Holy of Holies' in the sky,
The focus of effulgence, where the light
Is manifested of the Lord on high,
Where thick as star-waves angel troops alight
To worship and to praise Him with delight,
Thousands of thousands, and ten thousand times
Ten thousand thousands more, before His sight;
So on the earth from the remotest climes,
Shall nations come to hear sweet Zion's joy-bell chimes."

XIV.

"For Salem's Temple is earth's central shrine!
And as in Heaven nothing lives but love,

And nothing dies but death; so no more pine
Hearts human here; nor seeks the soul to rove
From duty, lest the Serpent scare the Dove:
Hence sorrow is ignored, and dole forgotten,
And life's light trials easy burdens prove;
No body can decay that was begotten,
No longer baits the worm on flesh corrupt and rotten."

XV.

"We drink the elixir of celestial rain,
That from the nursing bosom of the cloud
Falls on the herb as milk, on grass as grain;
Our frugal table fruits and cereals crowd,
But no beast is purveyor now of food;
No cannibalic hand whets the keen knife,
No maw carnivorous sheds the victim's blood;
The sacrament of love hallows all life,
And man pursues no more the brute with cruel strife."

XVI.

"Oh! blessed are the kind and meek, for theirs
Are earth and Heaven; and they shall surely see
The face of Love parental, who their prayers
Will hear with favor! Learn what ye will be
Glad to remember in eternity;
For ye shall only carry hence away
Your virtues with you. Pride of science flee,
Learn wisdom with thy heart that they may say,
Who thy demeanor view, 'there shines the Light of Day.'"

XVII.

"E'en as the music of an instrument
Tells what it is, and as a flower is known
By the sweet subtle breathing of its scent,
So by thy manners let thy mind be shown,
The sterling mintage stamp the die sinks on:
But if thy thoughts be dark, thine actions foul,
As in the limbec gold is drawn from stone,
So prayer and penitence from out thy soul
Can drain thy flinty heart, and leave thee pure and whole."

XVIII.

"Morphean hop and poppy that seduce
The sense entranced, defiling nicotine,
Nor staff of life sublimed to deadly juice
That stultifies or maddens, shall be thine,
But the clear hippocrene, almost divine,
Of knowledge, and the ominnisol of dew,
In which the elements transpicuous shine,
Filtered of sin and folly, dropping through
The clouds from crystal fountains in the ether blue."

XIX.

Thus preached the aged hierarch to his friends,
Softening in social intercourse the tone
Of ethic grandeur; then his hands he bends
In supplication to the sapphire throne.
With sudden light the living silence shone,
With angel tenants teemed the tents of air,
A field of gold striped with vermilion,

Whence couriers ministrant succinct appear,
Wardens to watch the earth, and guardian missions
bear.

XX.

Weird music sounded their approach, as soft
As the piano of the she-oak groves,
When through the lattice of their boles aloft
The faint breeze scarce the leafy curtain moves;
Soft as the secret sigh that fondly loves;
Soft as on infant's lip the whispers creep,
Dreaming of Eden and elysian doves;
Soft as the prayers of hope that for joy weep,
As its own mother watches that child smile in sleep.

XXI.

The canopy of Heaven's nocturnal shade
Envelops all things, all except the site
Where the domed Temple lifts its golden head,
Whence shoots aloft from penciled plinth of light
An obelisk that glows with beryl bright;
But now it's paling in the rising dawn,
And turns a pearl crepuscule, neither night
Nor day, but mingled bloom of both, to adorn
The Sanctuary, and shield it from the ardent morn.

XXII.

Now from all points their eager steps direct,
Holding palm leaves, the crowd towards the fane,
And at their head, with conscious worth erect,
Walks the Messiah, by his glorious train
Attended of the Apostles twelve, who reign

Each o'er a tribe set up of Israel;
Who their estate on high did not disdain
To leave, that they might with their Master dwell,
And who the pomp august with god-like grandeur swell.

XXIII.

Ambassadors were there from barbarous states,
Magnificoes from territories renowned
For arts and learning, thrones and potentates,
Who had their way from Plata's pampas found,
And Venezuelan llanos, hither bound,
And Patagonia's Emim multitude;
And orders intellectual trod the ground,
Degrees ethereal, with the wise and good,
And for earth's peace exchange Heaven's bright beatitude.

XXIV.

The cortege has approached the outer wall,
Built of dædalic blocks of marble white,
And reached the portal, whence from pillars fall
Festoons of vines enamelled; and alight
Within the vestibule, when on their sight
Bursts the pavilioned tabernacle, with dome
Perched high in air, as it were taking flight,
And in a dream of clouds about to roam,
Among the twinkling stars to find its native home.

XXV.

What piles immense of masonry are here?
What stones enormous? and what columns high,
Yet elegant and slender, that uprear

The alabaster spire 'gainst the blue sky?
Scarce can the doves up to its summit fly:
Piazzas niched and fretted run around
The courts elaborate, where fountains ply;
Long aerial flights of steps rise from the ground;
And an embellished porch of granite lifts the mound.

XXVI.

Through an arched gateway to the inner court
They pass, and come to where the inner shrine
Is screened by veils of purfled linen wrought;
They're drawn aside, and rays resplendent shine,
His head illumining with light divine,
As the Messiah enters, in whose face
A lofty dignity with peace benign
Attempered glows, and love with perfect grace,
While thus a voice proclaims from out the Holy Place:

XXVII.

"This is my Son beloved, in whom I'm pleased!
The earthly of My Heavenly, hear ye him!"
Deep thunders answered when the accents ceased,
And scintillating swords of Cherubim
Waved in the flame, and made the vision dim.
A silence followed, by carillons broke,
Harmonious concords of a distant hymn,
Inimitably sweet, when the audience woke
From out ecstatic dreams, as thus Emanuel spoke:

XXVIII.

"Abba! I thank Thee that Thou 'st testified
I am Thy Son approved, and given me power

That on my saints and martyrs, sanctified
By tribulations, I may blessings shower,
And them with gear of plenteous wisdom dower;
Me with the honor, which I held with Thee
Ere Death was born, or from creation's shore
The fleets of human souls sailed through the sky,
Endow, that I may rayon Thy Divinity."

XXIX.

"Thy Name I've manifested to the men
Whom Thou didst grant me. Thine they were, and they
Have kept Thy word. O do Thou keep them then
In Thine especial favor, that they may
The marvels of Thy Providence survey,
And love Thee grateful, and be wholly Thine,
As I am in Thee!- Be their guide and way
To immortality, for who are mine
Are Thine in Truth, the Comforter, and Peace divine."

XXX.

"Wherever in Thy Kingdom I may be,
I pray, in Thine immeasurable grace,
That Thou wilt deign to let them be with me,
That Thy reflected image they may trace,
As in a mirror, shadowed in my face,
And be enlightened by me, as I am
By Thee transfigured, be in us always;
Nor let their trust in me be put to shame,
But hear their pleading voice when they pronounce my name."

XXXI.

"Within the realms of Paradise above
Are many mansions. Thither I have been
Seats to prepare for you, where reigneth Love
Ineffable, and Joy, her handmaid, 's seen
With lilies' star beams and with amaranths green
Circling the brows of saints; and I am come
Back to receive you, and present you clean
And faultless to my Father in His Home
Above the vaulted roof of the siderial dome."

XXXII.

"He hath appointed me Lord of all things,
And me invested with earth's sovereign crown;
To me the charter he conveyed that brings
Eternal happiness, where round His Throne
Ascend in clouds of balm and cinnamon
The prayers of saints; and to all who believe
Him to be God, and me His chosen Son,
Whatever flesh that lives or may yet live,
His precious gift to me of life I freely give."

XXXIII.

"Let every creature the Creator praise!
From mammoth to the mite, whatever thrills
With sense or understanding, to Him raise
'Te Deums' gratulant! Ye lakes and rills,
Laud Him whose whisper your soft murmur stills!
Laud Him, whose breath, O sea, thy wrath excites!
Laud Him, ye quiet combes and storm-clad hills,
When His red thunderbolt your forest smites,
Or when His sun-winged shower upon your field
alights!"

XXXIV.

"Laud Him, O Ardors, who His lamps attend,
From Heaven's ceiling hung in golden air!
Ye sceptred sons of morn, who lowly bend
Before his footstool! spirits everywhere,
That execute his mandates, Him declare
The Inexpressible in majesty,
The Inscrutable in goodness, whose prime care
Is favored man! Then man Him magnify,
And, building steps with prayer, scale to the peace on High."

XXXV.

Thus prayed the Rose of Sharon to his Sire,
While knelt the crowd in adoration mute;
Nor were the Muses of the spheral choir
Silent, but Him whose power is absolute
Adored, but mercy His chief attribute;
And distant galaxies the burden heard.
Then dulcet symphonies of harp and lute,
And voices blest, first Heaven's grace implored,
And then this pæan raised to celebrate their Lord:

XXXVI.

"Daughter of Zion! shout for joy and sing!
Rejoice with all thy heart, Jerusalem!
For in thy midst is thy Messiah King,
Life of our hope, beneficent to them
Who him reviled with contumelious shame;
The mighty Counselor and Prince of Peace,
Exalted now above terrestrial fame,
Before whose presence strife and warfare cease,
And of whose kingdom there shall always be increase."

XXXVII.

"He's come, who was the fond desire of all,
Whom all with eyes of love admiring view;
No evil hence shall, Israel, on thee fall,
For he shall be to thee as Hermon's dew
Dropping on pastures green from heavens blue;
The grass shall spring, the tender fig tree blow,
Her tendril spread the vine where brambles grew,
With milk and hydromel the mountains flow,
And with the oil of gladness valleys melt below."

XXXVIII.

"Now follows on the plow the reaper blithe,
The ripening fruit o'ertakes the sprouting seed,
The grain is scarcely sown, ere by the scythe
It's cut for bread corn in the fertile mead,
Where no more flourishes the noxious weed:
Under the shadow of the sycamore
We dwell in safety, and the warbling reed
Shall Him extol who fills our ample store
With living bread and wine, our strength for evermore."

XXXIX.

"Israel exult! He has set up his throne
In David's city, there in peace to reign,
And all who pass her portals are his own,
No longer strangers: mourning, grief and pain
He soothes with sympathy that none complain;
The sick and helpless none dare now distress;
The widow's chattels none dare now distrain,
Nor is the orphan now left comfortless,
But all the sons of men his loving kindness bless."

XL.

"A Temple he has founded, and he is
High priest thereof, to offer sacrifice,
And make atonement for our deeds amiss,
Sealing our pardon for delinquent lies,
For deathful errors and iniquities.
O, be exceeding glad, for he is come
To rule on earth, as in elysian skies
His Father rules, where pleasures vernal bloom,
And where he hath for us prepared our final home."

XLI.

"A careful shepherd, thou dost feed thy flock,
And lead them by the hyacinthine rill,
Under the shelter of the shadowing rock;
Thou gatherest with thine arm the lamb that's ill,
And warm'st it in thy breast its cries to still,
And gently lead'st the ewe that's big with young.
How beautiful the feet upon the hill
Of him who brings good tidings, and whose tongue
Salvation publishes to Zion in sweet song!"

XLII.

"Eyes to the blind thou wast, feet to the lame,
A father to the poor, and to the weak
A nursing mother; by thy holy name
The deaf were taught to hear, the dumb to speak,
The halt to walk, the buried dead to wake;
Light of the world, laid under darkness' ban,
Thou art the lucent Virtue whom we seek!
Prolific of all good from God to man,
The archetype of thine own good Samaritan."

XLIII.

Soft o'er the pillared fane the twilight fell,
Serene and mellow, drenched by golden haze,
As lulled the descant, with the organ's swell
Toning "Amen" in varied notes of praise:
The congregation rise, and upward raise
Their looks, when in a molten jasper sea
They on a blissful revelation gaze,
Radiant with light and pageant jubilee,
While kindling clouds are fused in Heaven's alchemy.

XLIV.

T'wards the four quarters of the compass wave
Four priests ripe fruits and leafy branches green,
To give thanks to Him who these to them gave;
Then the whole city in a blaze is seen,
Of scattered flowers and painted lantern's sheen,
And fountain jets of the electric light,
Apparent sunshine throwing on the scene;
And in the Temple's outer court a bright
Band of young maidens dance with torches in the night.

DESTRUCTION OF THE EARTH.

CANTO X.

I.

SO live the Saints with their Messiah Lord
During a thousand years, till the whole earth,
Mortgaged by Sin, and forfeit, is restored.
And fruits again spontaneously brings forth,
And men, progressing through a second birth,
Developed into angels. Now had come
The Heavenly Kingdom; Truth had come, and worth
Blameless, and piety; but, tragic doom!
Christmas must be buried to rise from Easter's tomb.

II.

In Eden crept the Snake, and Innocence,
Flattered and duped by fraud, fell into crime;
The primal world was scored by violence,
Whence merged the Deluge, with its floods sublime,
To wash away the filth of human slime;
The patriarch's rule closed in idolatry,
The Law mosaic in routine and rhyme,
In war the gospel and apostasy,
And the Millennium's epilogue is misery.

III.

But blissful Innocence, that never knew
What evil was, was warned in Eden's bowers;
And Pride admonished it would dearly rue
Its wicked acts, before the vengeful hours
Had come, when poured the desolating showers
From Heaven's fountains, and the tides arose
From ocean's springs, and drowned the city's towers,
Sea-cliffs and inland peaks, and dreadful woes
O'erwhelmed the world, adjudged to death's precocious throes.

IV.

Rebuked was Sodom, but its habitants
The reprimand contemned, and treated Lot
As simpleton who raves, or fool who rants,
And while they rudely rioted were caught
In flames incumbent, and the hosting shot
Of boulders darted from the abyss of Hell;
"Watchman, what of the night?" Proud Salem got
Her reprehension; yet minded not the knell,
When her last prophet came her Temple's ruin to tell.

V.

But not a weather-seer a telegram
Of storm now sent, but all was still and calm;
Nor need the saints a warder to proclaim
The imminence of danger, and alarm
Friendly disciples, and the nations arm.

Ah! can it be where brother masons dwell
The burglar strife can enter peace to harm!
In God's own presence e'en the angels fell,
Who could to carnal flesh then ring the tocsin bell?

VI.

The sun that giveth alms of heat and light;
The planets, moons, and comets, stars, and skies
Are marvels beyond feeble words to write;
More wondrous are the hidden mysteries
Of life and death, and why existence is!
But use disowns the marvelous. Israel saw
The wilderness with daily manna freeze,
Yet looked not on it long with serious awe;
The guiding cloud and fire were merely natural law!

VII.

So now men question Sanctitude, unmoved,
And on the face of Virtue freely gaze,
Inviolably glorious, unreproved,
And unabashed with fear or with amaze,
As if celestial Grace had been always
A flower fossilized. While those who were
Living in reindeer fiords and narwhal bays,
In scorpion sands and snaky syrtes, where
The Locust King had reigned, his hated power
forswear.

VIII.

"What right have gnomes and fetches us to rule?
What need have we of warlocks to come down
From other spheres, on earth to set up school,
And teach us magic? Why should we Christ own

Our master? why respect each crazy clown?
We too ambitious are and quite as fit,
As his apostle dolts, to wear a crown,
And hold a sceptre, and on thrones to sit,
And nations just as well might kneel before our feet."

IX.

Such was the language of their discontent
And disobedience, when in Hell awoke
Satan from sleep, and found his shackles rent,
And the bars bolted of his prison broke:
Astonished, he recoiled, as if a stroke
Of lightning hurled had pierced his gnarled heart:
"Is it a dream?" Thus the arch-fiend spoke;
"These are the rivet links, now torn apart,
That pinioned tight my limbs in knotted meshes swart."

X.

"This chain of triple adamant, red hot,
That charred my vitals, eating to my heart
With pain insufferable, that incessant shot
Through every nerve, and muzzled every part,
With death benumbed. But what this body's smart
To the sore rankling in my envious soul?
There sharper than the sharpest tortures dart
The stings of shame, which I must passive thole;
For thought of Heaven lost is Hell's most poignant dole."

XI.

"Yet in my slumber felt I not a touch,
Nor heard the slightest syllable of sound—

Were this but true, and could my senses vouch
My fancies do not cheat me: yet around
The fires have slackened in the deep profound,
And the redundant rollers ceased to swell:
And now that manacles are no more bound
Around me, here no longer will I dwell,
But wend my way to earth, to make that earth a Hell."

XII.

"To me, exiled from Paradise, remains
This comfort in affliction—to destroy!
And man a partner in my dolorous pains
To circumvent with hopes that are a lie,
And his alliance with deceit to buy:
Urged on by desperate hate and envy of Heaven,
And scorn of earth, my compensating joy
Is to work so it may to ruin be driven:
Nor let Him blame the deed by whom the cause is given."

XIII.

"Never was seen the tide so calm before;
The smoke throws shadows on it, and the ghosts,
That on their chariot clouds of meteors soar,
Reflected are, as night's bespangled hosts
On the still lakes of earth. Scarce do the coasts
Appear the same, these cliffs of granite rocks
Which sleep in fire, that sinuous shore that boasts
Its reefs basaltic, where no sea-bird flocks,
Nor shell nor sea-weed 's thrown by the surf 's drumbling shocks."

XIV.

"For nothing lives within that sea beneath:
But millions live on earth to be my prey,
Serpentine spirits with immortal breath,
Whose brows shall thorns instead of crowns array,
Whom guile shall tempt to sin, and death dismay.
And Thou, who sittest on Thy Throne on High,
Beyond the confines of the light of day,
In solitary bliss and majesty,
Not unrequited will I pass thy malice by."

XV.

So spake the Hell-spite, by obdurate wrath
Inflamed, and inextinguishable hate,
That sought the glory of the saints to scath,
And on the wreck of Christendom create
His own dominion; but so had not fate
That bill endorsed. Then with a sullen scowl
He gazed around on regions desolate,
On swamps, and bogs, and tarns, black, fetid, foul,
And shook his spinous wings, and whooped with angry howl.

XVI.

The sound reverberated through the abyss,
From peaks and crags, deep antres, and dark caves,
Bellowing like thunder, when the red bolts hiss
Over the wind-swept cape, and the storm raves,
And wakes the ghosts that sleep in church-yard graves.
The demons startle up, and forward rush
To where their chief his arm in triumph waves,

And as they scramble on, their pinions brush
The swirling flames and smoke, and crouching phantoms crush.

XVII.

"The gates of Hades, shut a thousand years,
Are open. Will ye here supine remain,
A prey to eleemosynary fears,
Or will ye dare to strike a blow to gain
Your pristine honor, and your lost domain?
Better in arms forever to contend,
Though vanquished, and in misery and pain,
Than here, divorced from joy, pernicious spend
A vile existence, without hope, and without end."

XVIII.

"The way is easy, though the voyage far,
To those who are determined to be free;
Guiding our steps assured from star to star,
Through the illimitable profundity,
We soon will at the solar empire be,
Where the earth is, where pride again and hate
Excite intemperate men. Past that blue sea
Where worlds innumerous sail with living freight,
Our course is, where the orbs most thickly culminate."

XIX.

"Again with swarms of vipers has been sowed
Their fated soil broadcast; and 'tis my right
To reap the crop. Hostility I've vowed,
Irreconcilable, inalterable spite
Against this race abhorred, to sons of light

Preferred through envy of our godlike powers,
And jealous fear of our opposing might.
Man shall put forth his hand to pluck at flowers,
And grasp but thorns, and bleed till time's expiring hours."

XX.

"We wait thy will to lead us thither," cried
Nergal, fierce god of sanguinary war:
"O, who a moment would in Hell abide,
When its huge postern gaping stands ajar,
Inviting exit to the fields afar
In space diffuse. Indifferent to our fate,
Let us be gone, lest Heaven our egress bar;
Worse cannot fall than we have known of late,
Unless our Tyrant choose us to annihilate."

XXI.

"And that would scarce be worse than we have borne,
Unshrinking, uncomplaining, unsubdued!
The hour perhaps will come when we shall scorn
Submission to His proud, imperious mood,
And rive His Kingdom to the solitude
And wretchedness prevailing here, the lot
His wrath assigned us for our former feud:
Glorious the strife, though vainly then we fought!
Perhaps with more success we now may strive and plot."

XXII.

The rebel synod loud defiance hurled,
And braggart taunts, so much the retrospect
Of their imprisonment in their crude world

Of shadows fashed them, while they little recked
That their bold enterprise be total wrecked:
To suffer in these dungeon vaults beneath,
And they could not their doom reversed expect,
Always the enfeebled breath of slaves to breathe,
Is worse to souls heroic than immediate death.

XXIII.

As flocks of bats, when by some noise they're scared,
From out the fissures of a cavern start,
Fearing lest they might witless be ensnared,
And wheel in sudden jerks, and eerie dart
With shrieks into the air; so now depart
The devils from the doleful mews of Hell,
Tartarean sludge in foul morasses swart,
Their dens of darkness, dashing wild pell mell
Into the brink profound, with a tremendous yell.

XXIV.

A shoreless ocean, deep it is, and drear,
Unwashed with light or heat, water or air,
A spumous slough of horror and of fear,
A stygian quicksand, whither they repair,
With dreamless sleep of silence everywhere,
A pulseless gloom that terrifies the sight!
Where all things interfused and jumbled are,
And no penumbra, but the cone of night
Overlaps as with a pall the lifeless infinite.

XXV.

They fly, suspended in the yawning void,
Like storm-clouds driven o'er a ravine steep;

Now rising, as directed by their guide,
Now sinking in the hollow gullies deep,
And, thence emerging with fresh vigor, sweep
The boiling pools, exultant with fierce joy:
Then their closed phalanx in a wedge they keep
To pierce the comets thickening in the sky,
And archipelagos of nebulæ on high,

XXVI.

And nucleated orbicles on wings
Of fire molecular. They scud away
Where dawn empiric chiaro oscuro flings
Through hissing darkness as the ghost of day,
Shedding a faint phantasmagorial ray;
Where waves of chaos dashed to foam appear
Luminous, and float as wisps of Milky Way,
The portico of light, and in the drear
Avernian gulf are hulled, discomfited with fear.

XXVII.

At length, the chief of stellar dignities,
Sirius they spy, and their checked hopes revive:
They spread their flight through pit-falls in the skies,
And warp their leaden vans, plied hard to arrive
Where liverworts and sigillaries live,
And iguanodon sprawls on the strand;
And there against the fucoid green scum strive,
That threats to founder and englut their band,
And wheresoe'er they go, sackcloth enswathes the land.

XXVIII.

They pass, grim spectres, as from shore to sea
On earth the shadows of eclipses stretch,
And hood the cope of the infinity
With apparitions, such as fright the wretch,
Who hears the banshee cry, and sees his fetch
Stand on the skirts of dread immensities,
And shuddering looks into the mist, to catch
A glimpse of what awaits him in the skies,
Where awful secrets midst mysterious glories rise.

XXIX.

They leave the constellations on their way,
And the verge of our astral cluster gain,
Whence they the harl of dim cloud-worlds survey,
Plutonic chaos, the Neptunian main,
And Jove's Olympus; where Heaven's nomades rein
Their steeds of fire, as on they thundering pace
To some expiring sun, to light again
Its flickering taper; thence away to race
Past planets and their moons, where thought is lost in space.

XXX.

The splinters they descry of that wrecked world,
The lame and crippled Vulcan of the skies,
For some dark crime unnamed to ruin hurled,
A waif of sin, that floating fire-logged lies
Death's beacon buoy, as through the sea it flies
Of solar waves magnetic, earth's own dear
Brother of love! Oh! man, lift up thine eyes!
Behold the wandering Hell of thine own sphere!
A little while, and then the fate which thou dost fear!

XXXI.

Now they approach the looming coasts of earth,
And view the continents of hail and snow,
The caves of storms and chambers of the north;
The aerial gardens where the hoar-frosts grow,
And into crystal inflorescense blow
From buds of dew; the arsenals of thunder,
Where the hot lightnings in the red forge glow
Of clouds electric; and the rainbow's wonder,
Where water globules light in magic colors sunder.

XXXII.

As a flock falls of shattered aerolites,
Shot by the Archer of November skies;
So on the earth the grisly menace lights
With whirring clang, as when a hailstorm flies;
Tornado squalls and hurricanes arise,
And sweep the rocks from off the Aleutian isles,
And snap the iceberg loose from where it lies,
Bridging the land and water many miles,
And drive to Californian shores the mountain piles.

XXXIII.

Instant they drop upon a level plain,
A via dolorosa, where extend
Long leagues of downs, a pastoral champaign,
And over billowy seas of grasses bend
Their steps, and over bushes without end,
Trampling the prickly acanthus and the briar
Till the ground sinks beneath the path they trend
And torrifies beneath their tread the mire,
A pestilence that walks through flood, and fell, and fire.

XXXIV.

As in the ancient world the mastodon
And megatherium roamed the solitudes
Of cycas glades, and monsters preyed upon
The giraffe and the elk, and constant feuds
Prevailed with fury in the queachy woods;
So now the fear of death with anguish shakes
Again each creature of the multitudes
Existent on the earth, and pains and aches
Fly from Pandora's box, whose shut lid Satan breaks.

XXXV.

Astonished were the Powers of Evil when
They saw the denizens this globe contained,
The peerless spirits and the princely men,
The manna and the quails that on them rained,
The light of Heaven's sun, by crime unstained,
The rich oblation of the grateful prayer,
The growth of knowledge of God's mercy gained,
The poetry of beauty everywhere,
And secrets of rapt song that lips of pen declare.

XXXVI.

"O spectacle magnificent!" exclaimed
The arch imposter. "Millions here adore
The man-god, by the great Adonai named
His Vicar, and the Viceroy of His power,
On whom infatuate fools delight to shower
Mitres and crowns of glory, while I pine
In irksome wretchedness and envy sore;
For this Millennial Sovereignty divine,
With all its principalities, should have been mine."

XXXVII.

"And I am left neglected and despised;
No lavish promise now is pledged for aid
At my confessional, nor am I advised
Of sins in embryo, nor are blood-dues paid
My idol, nor are votive altars made
To deprecate the wrath of my dread name:
Yet was I once of seraphim the head,
And dared contend with internecine flame
'Gainst His supremacy, jealous of His high fame,"

XXXVIII.

" Who was the Victor; but not all victorious,
For I seized from Him half of His estate,
And with Him shared an empire not inglorious;
Since, where ruled His love, there still reigned my hate,
Until the hour when he willed to create
This Kingdom of His Saints, this Eden new:
Shall I resign me to the ignoble fate
To fly from this usurper and His crew,
And yield up all to them, or else the fight renew?"

XXXIX.

" Then war I'll wage, and rich will be the prize
To him who conquers—of all orbs the best,
The Arcady most ornate in the skies,
Of peace, and grace, and love, and joy possessed,
And linked with Heaven, its satellite confessed;
Where dwell assemblies of distempered men,
Some coveting preposterous to be drest

In budge authority, and power attain;
Others that they may gold, the soul of matter gain."

XL.

"Since purged by drastic hellebore of war,
They've lived in health robust a thousand years;
But Mammon has become the guiding star
To this Millennium: no more justice fears,
By bribes hoodwinked, to be what he appears,
Stock-jobbing Crœsus openly to tell
How he defrauded; nor the priest forbears,
Turned auctioneer, his tawdry pews to sell,
Nor pious author shrinks from gossip lipped in hell."

XLI.

"For sake of Chemosh wives of bourgeois kill
Their seed ere they had come to natural birth,
Assisted by some purse-paid leech's skill,
The womb become their church-yard ere brought forth;
The blood of innocents again stains earth,
Their smothered cries in depths of Hell are heard,
And these excite contempt, but scarcely mirth;
No puma ever yet her cubs abhorred,
The only monster is this world's voluptuous lord."

XLII.

"While concupiscent Eve her offspring spurns,
The orc and walrus draw their dugs to give
Suck to their calves; worse than the ostrich turns
Woman who would be angel! yet who live
And children nurse with care that they may thrive,

But rear them to be hirelings to the great.
Uxorious prodigal, sore shalt thou grieve!
Go, blind as instinct, love and propagate!
Thy son shall pass through fire to gild some Moloch's state!"

XLIII.

So mused the Apostate, cogitating ill:
But now he had arrived at Samarcand,
With his associate demons, who soon fill
The palaces and temples of the land,
And urge the factious people to withstand
The autocratic rule of the Messiah,
His arbitrary law and stern command,
To assail his Camp of Love with flame and fire,
And drive him with his saints back to his doating sire.

XLIV.

"This priest is too exacting in his calls
For dues, far too extortionate to pay,
The journey tedious to these festivals
And raree-shows; and why should Salem sway
The councils of your capital, and play
The patron hated? With our master's aid,
If ye will but his orders just obey,
Ye may this Agapœmene invade,
And the meek cushat's nest shall be in ashes laid."

XLV.

"The glory of the kingdoms of the world,
Once offered to this supercilious king,
He offers to you, when ye shall have hurled
From his proud seat this mammet, to whom bring

Princes their tribute, and his praises sing
With sycophantic zeal. Then think what ye
May then become, and how the world will ring
With your exploits when they your triumph see;
How Hell, with wild acclaim, will greet your victory."

XLVI.

The brooding discontent in fury burst,
Vented in mutinous maledictions loud,
Pillage and civil discord, and the worst
Indignities were offered, and a shroud,
Surmounted by a skull, was by the crowd
Hoisted upon the palace of the state;
Whose chief was forced to fly, too firm and proud
To yield to threats, or fear their frantic hate,
Too true their godless treason to propitiate.

XLVII.

At the head of this reinforcement, formed
Of states revolted, fit compeers of Hell,
And with Hell's powers, by sorcery transformed
To beasts ferocious, shagged with hairy fell,
Or scaly reptiles in their braided shell;
The tiger that on flesh its hunger slakes,
The vulture that can death and carrion smell,
Colossal vampires, wolves, and sharks, and snakes,
The foe of God and man the road to Zion takes.

XLVIII.

Winged as an ospray, Beelzebub appears
Astride a fire-maned dragon's bristling back,
That furious blazes as his crest he rears;

On a huge hirsute amphisbæna, black
With deadly venom, in a whirlwind's track
Rides the fell hate of Moloch, couching spear,
And jousting at the phantoms in the rack;
Thammuz and Dagon and the rest career
On horned hippogriffes, and scour through creek and mere:

XLIX.

And there are men bull-headed, brute and wild,
Lions man-faced, the ogre Minotaur,
Who sniffs the fresh blood of the new-born child
As perfume, Gorgons striking stony awe,
Harpies with fouling snout and greedy claw,
Hydras, Chimæras, Sphinxes, goblins, ghouls,
More fierce than ever lunes of madness saw,
Scorpions and pythons, hybrid fish and fowls;
And all these monstrous shapes possess demoniac souls.

L.

There was the dread of Demogorgon's name,
Like to a rumor of prophetic woe,
An apprehensive sense of ruin and shame,
As from a lipless mouth the mutters flow
In silent curses, with an unseen blow:
Impalpable as is a gust of wind,
He marches in the front, man's mortal foe—
The energumen that strikes with panic blind—
A fury to the heart, fate to the fearful mind.

LI.

And there was Sin, who like a woman smiled
With laughter-loving orbs, flames in disguise,

That with the serpent's fascination killed :
Twin stars, that seemed the watchers of the skies,
But were Death's keepers; tongue that dropped with lies,
The tinkling lure of the false syren's lyre,
A voice that compassed Heaven's symphonies,
And yet the sharpest pipe in all Hell's choir;
No creature formed of flesh, but fashioned out of fire.

LII.

But Satan paramount towers over all,
His countenance the human face divine,
Instinct with scorn, and hate, and envious gall;
Yet on his brow deep thoughts the furrows line,
With dark misgivings and distrust malign;
Mounted on Death's pale charger, while around
The air is thick with Lemurs, line on line
Soaring aloft, and shimmering the ground,
Till heaves the moon eclipsed, tempested by the sound.

LIII.

Terrific, hideous, horrid was the steed,
Of form voluminous, as a cloud distent
With hail, when driven by the north wind's speed;
Champing the bit, from off his withers bent
He shook black atrophy, his nostrils sent
Agues that waste the flesh to atomies,
And pustules raise that heart and rein torment:
His roar was like a battle's hosting cries,
Or thousand ghosts that shriek along the thundering skies.

LIV.

The turf by their tread plowed and harrowed, rose
In ridges sluiced with fire, the flexile air,
Fanned by the furnace blast of pinions, glows
With incandescent pillars; everywhere
Is heard a rattle, or is seen a glare;
Voices are heard that to each other shout,
Beneath the earth, whence hollow threatenings blare;
Forests and rocks are crushed along their route,
And bays, and sounds, and loughs evaporate in drought.

LV.

Where'er they pass the soil with smudgy smoke
Reeks as a kiln, or as a blasted moor
Is seared by noxious fumes that verdure choke;
They onward move, portending death before
And leaving plagues behind; down swift they pour,
As alpine avalanches crashing fall;
And up they scale the braes, as drives the frore
Snow-storm against a rugged pinnacle,
And with their iron tramp crevice the rocky wall.

LVI.

The beauty of Zion looms before their eyes,
With her empyreal Temple, and her towers
Resplendent, battlements, spires, balconies,
And cupolas, o'er which a halo lowers
An orbed glory, steeped in rainbow showers:
The camp is quiet; no preparations mar
The sweet repose that reigns, no banded powers

Embattled, are drawn up the impending war
To combat, for the saints in Jesus trustful are.

LVII.

He leads a retinue of priests within
The Holy Tabernacle to pray to God;
For well he knows the irate Lord of Sin
Will now be punished by his Father's rod,
And Death beneath the heel of Glory trod:
The word was spoke a thousand years before,
And ratified as law by Jao's nod,
That men should learn the arts of war no more,
But peace should rule from shore to antipodean shore.

LVIII.

The crests and shoulders of the mountains beam
With trains of glinting spear and fiery lance,
And corslets, shields, and casques and morions gleam
As the slant rays of dawn upon them glance:
Files upon files of rebel troops advance
In lines and squares on foot, and form the van,
Ranks upon ranks of foaming coursers prance,
Ensigns and gonfalons the breezes fan,
And plume and panoply equip beast, fiend, and man.

LIX.

The Hallucinated now on chariot borne,
Inflames with passion as a setting sun,
With storms distent; by teams of griffins drawn,
He grows in space terrific, with a crown
Of starry grandeur decked, a zodiac's zone

That turbans darkness; arrogant and vain
He looks, and sneers disdainfully upon
The fellowship of peace, angels and men
Who, heedless of his rage, forbearance calm maintain.

LX.

Yet sad he seems at times, mistrustful tried
By penitential awe; his lordly lips
Are then with pallid hues of terror dyed:
As the moon in an annular eclipse,
When in the garish orb her disk she dips,
Shows a black visor, with a cusp around;
So round his head a luminous circle clips
His temples, with his jeweled mitre bound,
But down his face is turned, a shadow to the ground.

LXI.

Standing upon his car, with finger pointed
Towards Jerusalem, with vapid pride
Uplifted militant against the anointed
Melchizedec, thus to his host he cried,
And thus the power of Heaven and earth defied:
"There is a god, omnipotent to save,
Almighty to coerce, who seeks to hide
When dangers threaten, in the Temple's cave,
Too meek and timid grown to gird on thigh his
glaive!"

LXII.

"The prize is ours! See how the seraphs sneak
From our resentment! They have gone to prayers!
To whine for help, afraid a lance to break,
Lest they be gashed and gored: far other cares,

To fatten sleek on singing psalms are theirs,
Than the hard blows of rude contending war.
The sight of blood the maudlin martyr scares,
The saint precise and prim a wound might mar,
And sanctimonious looks be spoiled by a foul scar."

LXIII.

"And shall I to this driveling weakness bend
A suppliant knee, and fawn, and sue for grace?
To his humility for pardon send,
And with an abject, hypocritic face,
Cry mercy? No, but to my chariot's trace
I will attach this nonpareil, and drive
Him, urged precipitant by whips to race
Over the ruins of his own drone hive;
This right hand is the god by which I mean to thrive."

LXIV.

That instant from the Heavens a shaft of fire,
By awful vengeance thrown, the lofty brow
Of the Aspirer struck, and sheared a dire
Chasm hideous, hurling to the depths below
Him shrieking, quivering, writhing from the blow:
Down from the Hill of Evil Council cast,
He fell, the fractured clouds careering through,
Through sideral storms maleficent aghast,
And sunk through chaos back to native Hell at last.

LXV.

Ten thousand linked thunderbolts are sent
In rapid volleys from the zenith's cope,
And, flashing through the whirlwinds turbulent,

With ravage on the land and waters drop,
Scattering huge rocks, wrenched from the hills, nor stop
Their havoc there; but chains of mountains rend,
And their firm granite-banked foundations ope
And the thick lodes of metal tilt and bend,
And toss the molten ore in showers without end.

LXVI.

The lakes of pitch and bitumen ignite,
And beds of nitre fulminate in flame;
The oceans boil, and as their billows light
On heated shelves and reefs, they burst in steam
Explosive, with a subterranean scream
From lacerated scars, and shivered peaks,
And shattered promontories, with wood and stream
Still hanging pendant, and the splintered wrecks
To atoms are calcined, and earth asunder breaks.

LXVII.

In the uproarious, black profundity,
A grave to swallow up the universe,
Glares the carbuncle of the sun's red eye,
A funeral torch to light dead nature's hearse,
Waved by fell Hecate with demoniac curse;
The spectral condor, swooping in the sky,
Drops ruffled and convulsed, a stiffened corpse;
Yet even then in frantic agony
Mothers their sucklings sought to snatch and blindly fly.

LXVIII.

Then detonating flames of hydrogen
Shot from the day-god's mouth, and with a tongue

Licked up the comet's phosphorescent train,
And Jove's four moons, and Saturn's rings that hung
Suspended in a silver girdle strung
Round the old sky-king's waist, till Neptune's car,
Driving the asteroids of worlds among,
Glows on the rim of solar space, a phare
Warning of danger to each nether nebulous star.

LXIX.

The cerement of the night, that was to know
No dawning morrow, folded with her pall
The moon and stars extinguished. Woe, woe, woe
To earth's inhabitants! from Heaven's hall
The golden lamps and silver cressets fall;
And the orb "Wormwood" ruins with a flood
That curdles wells and fountains into gall,
And rivulets to ooze of gory mud—
Horror on horrors worse! the very air is blood!

LXX.

Then an archangel, robed in light, descends
On doom's-day mission, with a dark, dead star
Incoronate, to announce that time now ends,
And peals the sonorous metal that afar
Alarum blares, where'er the living are,
Or the defunct are buried, echoing round,
Deafening the din of elemental war:
The requiem, as an earthquake, cracks the ground,
And seas are lifted up, and vanish at the sound.

LXXI.

Stunned and aghast, the living senseless gaze,
Mute and immovable, paralyzed with fear:

And as they stand with anguish of amaze
Impetrified, the igneous atmosphere
Infolds them, conscious in a deathless bier:
They feel as if from out their frames the blood
Is trickling, while their flesh to essence clear
Is transubstantiating, and endued
With spirit only as their bodies are renewed.

LXXII.

With rattling rustle of unnumbered wings,
Mid lamentations and loud clamor, Time,
The infanticidal mother of all things,
Rolling in convoluted folds sublime
Her form Protean, shadowy now and dim,
Sails from the earth away to other spheres,
The starry steps of firmaments to climb,
To where a point of light in space appears,
The fœtus of an orb just born, and thither steers.

LXXIII.

What morn is this that breaks upon my night?
My sleeping dust wakes at the clarion's sound,
And, eyeless though it be, is dowered with sight;
I feel a tremor creep along the ground,
In fibres of pellucid ether bound,
And mold itself to shape, and start to life,
Essential spirit; while the worms around
Burrow in darkness, frighted by the strife
And coil of struggling clods, with new existence rife.

LXXIV.

My soul mounts Nature as my Throne; I tread
On air and light, till of myself a part

Seems the whole hemisphere above my head;
I feel the hidden God within my heart,
And smile at fate; for hence can never part
Death or his Shade the spark divine in me;
The sun by day can smite no more, nor smart
The moon by night; but, though from terror free,
As trembles fear, so pants my dread felicity!

LXXV.

What day is this that breaks upon my night?
The graves are opened, and the dead arise
Quick, and in organs clad of tissued light,
No more corruptible; they ride the skies
Through smoke and embers where their pathway lies,
A host beyond all number numerous;
Brighter than sunbeams are the liveries
Of disembodied souls transpicuous,
As through typhoons of flame ascend the righteous.

LXXVI.

And not more instantaneously the cloud
Across its breast the listed colored zone
Of Peace invests, and doffs its sable shroud,
Than they their metamorphic weeds put on;
Nor yet more quickly doth on Lebanon,
Hid in the cavern tenebrous of night,
Peer o'er its highest pinnacle the sun,
And flood the fields with golden waves of light,
Than bursts the Throne of God on their astonished sight!

LXXVII.

But loom the wicked through the lurid haze,
As meteors ominous of deathly hue,
Or sickly stars, that scarce through fogs can gaze.
Sodden with sin, soaked in the dye of rue,
As Hell beneath wide opening they view;
Yet dart they upward, though against their will,
Through sulphurous hail, and rattling thunder through;
Despair, remorse, and fear their senses fill,
And horrors worse than Hell their souls with anguish thrill.

LXXVIII.

Pagods and palaces then tottering fell,
And crumbled into puffs of dust away;
The pyramid, that stood a sentinel
Of other ages, whence he might survey
The generations of mankind decay,
As solid as the earth's own granite base,
Down toppled in a cloud of grimy spray
And jets of cinders; and simooms efface
The cities and the towns where hive the human race.

LXXIX.

The immensity of waters roaring swell
With turbid inundations to the sky,
That fumes with the dilated briny Hell,
As the blue serpents of the lightning fly
Through torrents and through waterspouts on high:
The forests reek, singed and charred Acherons,
Rivers dry up their beds, rocks liquify,

And flow in vitreous pools, and shuddering groans
The continent with pangs, and trembles in her bones.

LXXX.

The palm uplifts a crown of scorched leaves;
The lily folds her petals to her breast,
Fair virgin nun, and for her May prime grieves,
In a sarcophagus of flames to rest,
By the soft hand of morn no more caressed;
A holocaust of beeves burns the green meadow,
A hecatomb wild beasts and birds unblest;
Life flies from earth as flies the evening shadow,
And Nature dies, an immolated Brahmin widow.

LXXXI.

Loud is the screeching of the rushing wind,
Terrific are the flaps of the great sheets
Of conflagration, that to ashes grind
The Andes and the Alps, whilst pumice sleets
Are blown through craters by the tumid heats.
And scoria sluices run in moraines deep
Into the dried-up friths, where no tide beats
Against Typhœan cliffs, but the waves sweep
In blazing deluge as from isle to isle they leap.

LXXXII.

The ice-floes at the polar circle melt
Before the circumambient torch of air;
The glacier-mound combustible has felt
The thermal breath, and in the ruddy glare
The snow and frost in vapor disappear;
The elements dissolve, the gases burst,

And in dense clouds roll in the atmosphere,
Down spout the horrent cataracts accursed,
And air and water are in Phlegethon immersed.

LXXXIII.

Hither with terror wild the demons fly,
O'er hissing sludge eruptive, to avoid
The rifted Ætnas raining from the sky;
Thither behind some standing ridge to hide;
In vain their hopes in safety to abide:
The lightnings find them, and with fury smite
Unerring, the All-seeing Eye their guide;
Transfixed they fall, shorn of their strength and might,
And prone and headlong plunge in the abyss of night.

LXXXIV.

In the dread cataclysm, sweating with steam
From Styx's consuming flood, through the bronzed smoke,
The shades of Gog and Rynô ghastly gleam,
From their confinement in their kennels broke,
Where them the trumpet of the angel woke:
Shrieking they come, afraid of judgment more
Than of the driving Furies' goading stroke,
While past them shuddering the devils pour,
Pursued by angel guards, who fire-clouds on them shower.

LXXXV.

As when from out the solar loins this globe
Was born, a red-hot, cinerated sphere,
With dingy vapor for her swaddling robe,

So now the corpse of the terrene on bier
Of bickering flame is in her sepulchre
Of soot interred; the boiling aludel
Froths with the scum of chaos everywhere;
Yet not a zephyr curls the molten swell,
But silence undisturbed reigns o'er the murky Hell.

LXXXVI.

Dread pomp sublime of horrors without end!
No sun can bleach her winding sheet of mist,
Thick clouds and exhalations, that ascend
To shroud the skies; nor can the alchemyst
Tincture the woof with evening amethist;
And yet an unseen Builder silent lays
Strong cofferdams the ruin to resist,
And drives huge buttress piles, on which to raise
The new Jerusalem, with gold and gems ablaze.

THE LAST JUDGMENT.

CANTO XI.

I.

ON a white Throne, pavilioned by the skies,
In the deep calm of Heaven's blue above
Our solar sphere, by lofty sanctities
Surrounded, sat the God of Truth, and Love,
And Justice, man and all his deeds to prove,
If good or evil: centre of all light,
And centre of all life, around him move
The orreries which else were veiled in night,
But with His glory blaze, and chronicle His might.

II.

Through the circumference unending roll
Systems of worlds, and to him reverent bow,
As to his call they turn from pole to pole;
Clusters of globes that in fire-oceans flow,
In sparry dust cycles of suns that glow,
And orbs that mingle rays of every hue,
As in a brotherhood of light they go;
All hail Him Judge Supreme with homage due,
Whose Eye alone their labyrinthine works can view.

III.

The wonders of the darkness in the deep
  Unfathomable, and secrets of the abyss,
Beyond the bounds where trackless comets sweep,
  Where the chaotic sunless region is,
  Stand in suspense at coming mysteries;
With thunder ope the welkin's sapphire doors,
  And, cataracts of wings and fiery eyes,
The angelic name on the ethereal floors
Innumerous rush, Dominions, Virtues, Princedoms
    Powers.

IV.

Legions of sabaoth around the Throne,
  And mitred demigods, armed sword in hand
Of waving flame, to guard the Holy One,
  Within the halo of His shadow stand,
  Dark in the light divine the lustrous band;
O'er golden harps ten thousand seraphs bend,
  Pensive and mute, absorbed in wonder grand,
And lines of white-robed spirits without end
In ordered rank and file the dread assize attend.

V.

Below His footstool of refulgent clouds
  Another seat was raised, upon which sat
The Assessor of his Father's power, by crowds
  Encompassed of his saints in solemn state,
  Pondering the fiat of impending fate
On anxious myriads of their fellow men:
  The likeness of the Godhead increate

Sublimes the countenance of the Lamb, once slain,
Commissioned now the might of Hell and Death to chain.

VI.

Upon his head he wears a kingly crown,
And his Sire's sceptre with almighty sway
Holds in his strong right hand, while o'er his throne
A curtained canopy of stars display
The Southern Cross and fields of Milky Way.
To him the Records of all life are brought,
Three ponderous volumes writ with penciled ray
Of light indelible, that cannot blot,
Where are inscribed all deeds, all words, and every thought.

VII.

Oh! blest is he whose name is in the Book
Of Life eternal! He shall pass from death
To bliss unspeakable, and he shall look
Straight on the Judge's face, nor fear his breath
Comminatory, but his brows enwreath
With flowers immortal, wove with beams of light;
The frontispiece immutable of faith,
With impress of his conduct blazoned bright,
He bears hence, with the Morning Star of Glory dight.

VIII.

Swarming appear before the Judgment Seat
Souls, like a cloud of motes sunbeams illume;
On either side arranged before the great
Tribunal, to receive immediate doom,
Whether in grief to waste, or joy to bloom;

The resurrection of the human race,
Whom earth can hold no more, nor seas inhume,
Nor death retain, who in an instant trace
The whole of their past lives, each limned before his face.

IX.

Quick as the twinkle of a falcon's eye,
Their antecedent acts revived again,
With omnipresent consciousness they spy
In visions passing through the nimble brain,
Raised from the nothingness where they had lain;
A shifting panorama of all scenes
From infancy to age, where care and pain,
And hopes and fears are pictured on the screens,
And every good work done, and all accusing sins.

X.

They live a lifetime in a moment's space;
And recognize each thought, and word, and deed,
And every motive ken of guilt or grace:
Before their view the ghosts of crimes proceed
In sad procession, and no prompter need
To tell their names; for there a spot is seen
Obtrusive, that appears with fire to bleed,
Each damning carnal trespass, which can clean
Repentance only unless Heaven's mercy intervene.

XI.

Those smile with peace, these frown with grim despair,
Lugubrious; all are portraits of their deeds:

Adam, and his whole progeny, are there;
Each generation, as the one succeeds
The ancestral generation that precedes;
The giants who had lived before the Flood,
The tribes of patriarchs after, human seeds
Sown in the earth, that brought forth flesh and blood,
Till thick as blades of grass grew up the multitude:

XII.

The nations who had founded states renowned,
The populace of cities passed away,
Since ages unremembered, but now found;
The inhabitants, dread thought! of our own day;
Familiar faces, whom we fond survey;
Of empires the dry bones and living hives,
The nomades sparse that in zaharas stray;
Who flouts in pride, and who in sorrow grieves—
Our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, sons, and wives.

XIII.

Here are the forms colossal of the first
Born of the earth, of massive bone and thew,
And cliff-like beetling brow, mid mammoths nursed
And behemoths; and yet their daughters drew
Angels from Paradise their charms to view,
So sweet and amiable in wanton guiles
That lure to love: the sons of Heaven flew
From Heaven's battlements, against their wiles
Resistless, leaving peace and bliss for woman's smiles.

XIV.

The mythic shape of Nimrod tines confessed,
Extravagant barbarian, who first sought
Empiry over man: his haughty crest
A plate of gold, with spikes of iron wrought,
Encircles; and the sword with which he fought,
His titled sceptre, in his nerveless hands
He grasps in vain, the steel turns into nought:
Drained of his strength prodigious, faint he stands,
And scowls with huge distress round on the armed bands.

XV.

And dynasties of Pharoahs, as a cloud
With rainbows frushed, trod the translucent floor,
Attired in regal garments for a shroud,
Ablaze with emeralds, and the pshent they bore
Of double Egypt, but with pride no more;
Nor with the spirit of their Parent Sun
Flamed their souls then, as to the Memphian shore
Their thoughts, sad pilgrims, wandered, and the dun
Degraded tribes their craft in priestly kingship won.

XVI.

A cerement, interwove of light and shade,
Invests the son of Ammon, in whose face
Dim streaks of glory into darkness fade,
Ambition adumbrating princely grace:
Why in the hero Satan should we trace?
He sowed the earth with wars, and now he reaps
The bloody harvest: into vasty space

He looks across his shoulder, and he sweeps
Worlds at a glance, but for their conquest no more
weeps.

XVII.

As in an autumn fog two ravens loom,
The rival consuls lower, matched in crime,
Destroying ministers of angry doom;
And he who on their ruins aimed to climb
To the world's throne, with intellect sublime,
More shrewd and subtle, polished and refined,
As bold and yet more gentle, than whom time
Brought not a grander genius to mankind,
Now strives his Nessian toga round his face to bind,

XVIII.

To hide his discomposure. Him beside,
A vile abortion, from his mother's womb
Thrust by a nightmare, shrinks the matricide:
Despair sits on his brow in hearse-like gloom;
He knows that justly in perdition's tomb
His fate is sealed irrevocable, and quakes
Convulsed, as on the worthless pomp of Rome
He thinks, and on himself its shame, then wakes
From horrid dreams to worse that on his senses breaks.

XIX.

Then leaps his frightened heart against his side,
To escape the moxa torch of burning thought;
Unutterably forlorn, one moan he sighed,
And saw the pool of blood he had in sport
So wanton shed, and with the vision fought

In vain; down on his throat his head declined,
And torpid fell his hand, yet twitching wrought,
As if at spectres clutching in the wind;
And thousand deaths and furies seized his wretched mind.

XX.

But mid the saints elect there Alfred stood,
Entranced in bliss, of Albion's kings the best,
The pious, learned, and the only good,
Of tender heart and soul devout possessed,
A hero sanctified, a scholar blest:
And near is Blanche of Castile, Gallia's queen,
Her people's mother, now a queen confessed
Among the brides of Heaven, with gentle mien
The spectacle regarding, calm, sedate, serene.

XXI.

Yet oft her stolen glance is cast upon
An angel face beside her, who had been
Her soul of life on earth, her dear loved son,
Now splendent with the pure and dazzling sheen
Of beauty where the prime of youth is green
In Spring immortal: champion of the Cross,
Mistaken saint, ill-fated paladin,
Thy mother's death mourned thy untimely loss,
A blush of shame thy bliss dashes with just remorse.

XXII.

Close to them is the sage of Cambalu,
The first-born of the pundits, who first taught
The reverence to law and order due,

And the rude churl, uncouth barbarian, brought
To live submissive to the rule of thought:
Bland the philanthropist appeared and kind,
Shrewd the philosopher, austere and haught;
He oped the windows of the human mind,
And let God's sunshine in to illuminate mankind.

XXIII.

Greater than he, with an undaunted gaze,
The Parsee Prophet proudly scanned the light,
Where round the Judgment Throne the fiery blaze
Enkindled as a sun, and to his sight
Ormasdes seemed, the Antagonist of Night:
The Dorian legislator, whose stern code
A race of warriors of heroic might
Made of his countrymen, with ardor glowed
As he surveyed the ranks where marshaled angels rode:

XXIV.

And Numa, too, was there, whose mind, the seat
Of peaceful thoughts, loved to frequent the shade
Of the cool grotto, where Egeria sweet,
No simulacre of a mortal maid,
Nor creature spun of meagre nothing's braid,
But Wisdom's Heavenly Muse, in ethic hymn
Of man conversed, and social lore conveyed,
Communed of Nature, and of God supreme,
And of Religion, which is God that dwells in him.

XXV.

In the wide chancel of the marble air
The court is held, and ghosts in ranks are spread

Thick on the cloud-swept hall, and everywhere
A hedge of lightning flanks the risen dead,
And thunders mutter vengeance overhead:
Around are sentries, who the circuit pace
On watchful guard; and farther, zodiacs tread
The longitudes interminable that trace
The future, as they stretch their line through azure space.

XXVI.

The thought appals me! scarce I dare proceed
To paint the anguish and the horror dire,
The wild remorse, perhaps for one sole deed
Left unatoned, as wreathes in coiling spire
Around the spirit's heart the worm of fire,
That never dies, but burns as it consumes;
Now but a spark that chafes to kindle higher,
And flame, but till the final sentence dooms
The wretch to pangs of Hell it scarce a flash illumes.

XXVII.

As blazing wide the skirts of glory roll
Before a rushing whirlwind, loud is heard
A mighty voice, that to the guilty soul
Speaks thunderbolts in every awful word:
"Son of my love! to whom I have transferred
My empire o'er revivified mankind,
And on whom all dominion I've conferred
To bind in Heaven, and in Hell to bind,
As justice shall or mercy sway thy righteous mind;"

XXVIII.

"Sole upright found of all the sons of men!
For thou wert flesh, and frailty once didst know,
Yet ne'er succumbed to sin, nor swerved to pain;
And, though severely afflicted, did'st not show
A fainting heart, but with thy sainted brow
Uplifted in thy dying agony,
Forgav'st thy foes, such pity then had'st thou
For crime through ignorance, from malice free;
Judge now thy fellow creatures in like charity."

XXIX.

"Since who so fit as thou, who erst hast been
As one of them, and felt their troubles sore,
Their cares oppressive, and misfortunes keen,
To weigh their actions, and their thoughts explore,
Whether the strong enticement were not more
At fault than was their trespass. Lenient be,
Considerate and placable on score
Of venial misdemeanors, but strictly try
Lies, slander, guile, theft, murder, and hypocrisy."

XXX.

"I have no pleasure in the bad man's death,
But chasten him that he may grace receive
To breathe of empyrean skies the breath,
And drink the light where souls eternal live;
And this my last best gift him will I give,
And gather to myself all things in One,
When nothing living shall be found to grieve,
But mercy cincture Heaven as a zone,
And joy, as fragrant galbanum, salute My Throne."

XXXI.

Thus His command Omnipotence expressed:
And as the Chancellor of Heaven rose,
With meekness bright, the image manifest
Of Love and Mercy in his countenance glows,
Yet his similitude with Justice shows;
And thus illumined with the traits divine
Of majesty preëminent, he bows
Obedience, pleased. "Whatever will be Thine,
To do that sovereign will delighted shall be mine;"

XXXII.

"For Thy law's written, Father, on my heart!
I thank Thee that Thou so hast magnified
Thy Son as to him Thine own power impart
To judge all flesh; and further, dost confide
All things to him, by Thy gift sanctified,
Thy sword, Thy rod, Thy sceptre, and Thy crown,
Not mine, but Thine; on whom alone abide
All honor and renown, who on Thy Throne
In glory inaccessible rul'st Heaven alone."

XXXIII.

"The hour of my high exaltation 's come!
O, grant me wisdom, Father, to maintain
Mine own integrity, that I may doom
None undeservedly to wrath and pain,
But in each sentence just Thy law sustain.
Thou hast been pleased to approve my life below,
Initiatory trial to attain
Thy favor, and redeem mankind from woe;
Yet Thou wast ever near to soothe my aching brow."

XXXIV.

"To Thee the honor of my triumph then
Acknowledged be, the merit sole to Thee
Ascribed, and undisparaged still remain:
That work on earth committed unto me
With Thy support I finished faithfully;
This let me now proceed in grace to do,
And Thee in my new office glorify,
That all created life the heavens through
Thy justice and Thy perfect righteousness may view."

XXXV.

The Rede of Fate is opened, and the Tomes
Of good and evil deeds, and now the Son
Of God and man, while pride august illumes
His visage jubilant, resumes his throne;
And, turning to his right hand, in a tone,
Mild as the call of spring to buried flowers,
Bland as the mother's voice to the loved one
Her bosom cradles, sweet as summer's showers,
Securing hopes of harvest, thus his heart outpours.

XXXVI.

"Oh! come, ye blessed of my Father, come,
Inherit your estate, your just reward
Well earned receive, and in the elysian home,
From the foundations of the world prepared
For you, live hence forever! for ye shared
Your pittance with my dearth, and when I was
Athirst your cruse of water, and ye cared
For me, although a homeless exile, as
I sought your open doors, when others let me pass."

XXXVII.

"When I was naked, ye with pity kind
Clothed me, when sick ye solaced me, and when,
Falsely accused, I was in prison confined,
Ye sent relief, and visited my den,
Deserted and despised by other men."
As he to Sabbath Rest, ineffable
Fruition, invited them, before their ken
He seemed converted into light, to dwell
Wholly in spirit, grace and glory visible.

XXXVIII.

Astounded and bewildered what to think,
The just reply, "Oh, Lord! when saw we Thee
Hungry, and fed Thee? thirsty, and gave Thee drink?
When did we succor Thee in poverty?
Or offer Thee our hospitality?
When clothed Thy nakedness? or when Thy bed
Of sickness did we visit? or when hie
To comfort Thy distress in dungeon laid?
Or when with sympathy soothed we Thine aching head?"

XXXIX.

Then answers them the Judge with smiles divine,
While saying prayers, their hearts are stilled in peace,
For ecstasy is mute. "Since it was thine
To do this good to one, the least of these,
My brethren and disciples, it doth please
Me to apprize it as if done to me:
Love, that a friend in every creature sees,

Becomes a lord of immortality,
And owns a fief in Heaven, a freehold in the sky."

XL.

"Like summer, ye were mothers of the poor,
Like autumn, nurses to the sick and weak;
Your life-thoughts did not shut Truth out of door,
And let Pride in; no conscious guilt your cheek
Blanched while your lips strove calumnies to speak;
Ye fainted not to be sincere and true,
Impregnable to vice, in trial meek;
Ye suffered wrong, and did revenge eschew;
And when afflicted unrepining wiser grew."

XLI.

He beckons, and a row of seraphs lead
The elect away, while touched by tuneful hands,
The harp harmonious and the mellow reed
Herald their sun-lit steps to flowery lands;
The air is serenaded by the bands,
Ten thousand choristers in clouds unseen
Chant the glad tidings through the topaz strands,
Through the cerulean, through the hyaline,
And where the cohorts pass is flamed with rainbow sheen.

XLII.

But ere they leave the threshold of the court,
On them their Arbitrator casts a look
Of love complacent; then in splendors caught,
Like the lithe eddies of a purling brook,
Or fluttering pages of a folding book,

They rustle into bliss and disappear;
And threw no shadow, as their course they took
Through flowers and music, on the diamond sphere,
So pure their essence was, so sunny bright and clear.

XLIII.

To where the sanctuary empyrean burns,
Primordial Treasure House of light, they wend,
Where the imperial throne instinctive turns
Its living wheels in wheels, fire-eyed and bend,
With unbeginning globes, and without end,
Welkins stretched through infinitudes of space;
Where sisterhoods of worlds concentric blend,
And suns, moons, planets, meteors, comets race
Through Heaven of Heavens to kneel before the Seat of Grace.

XLIV.

Then fixing a regard piteous though stern
Full on the wicked placed at his left hand,
Who at his frown severe begin to turn
Confounded and abashed, and trembling stand,
Statues in stone, awaiting his command,
He thus arraigns them: "Into Hell depart
Ye sinners unrepentant, to the land
Of groans and howling darkness, where the smart
Of the undying Worm of Death shall sting your heart,"

XLV.

"Where ye shall cleanse in purifying flame
Your lusts perverse, till penitence renews
The spirit in you, overwhelmed by shame,

The sink of sin, and suffering subdues
The law, and pays to equity her dues:
For I was clemmed, and faint for want of food,
And to me starving ye did bread refuse;
And when to cool the fever of my blood
A cup of water asked, ye scoffed with hauteur rude."

XLVI.

"I was a stranger, robbed and beaten sore,
And hard assaulted by the pelting storm,
And on my face ye heedless banged the door,
Nor dressed my wounds with therapeutic balm,
But spurned me from you as some loathsome worm;
When I was sick, ye strutted scornful by,
As if my sight would do you grievous harm;
And when for conscience sake condemned to die,
Ye jeered, and mocked, and laughed at my extremity."

XLVII.

They too surprise at the impeachment own,
What means their Censor, and this answer make:
"When thee extenuated had we known
With drought or famine, and denied to take
Compassion on thee? When with sorrows' ache
Or teen of sickness stricken, or consigned
To durance, persecuted for truth's sake,
And to thy sufferings were we deaf or blind?
When did we shun or spurn thee? When were we unkind?"

XLVIII.

He more incensed, this argument returns:
" Since unto them, my saints, ye did it not,
To me ye have not done it. Goodness yearns
Still to do good; but ye had quite forgot
All common sympathy with human lot.
Incorrigibly selfish, ye shall have
For stars and ribbons, and the gauds ye sought,
And scarlet pride so dear to craven slave,
The coronet of fire that crowns the titled knave."

XLIX.

" Ye never envied virtue, only wealth,
Ye ne'er refused the ill that would enrich,
By murder, force, corruption, fraud, and stealth
Ye pounced on all within your talon's reach;
Vultures that never ceased for prey to screech;
Crocodiles that gulfed a parish in your maw,
Sucking the poor of blood, as sucks the leech:
Fish of the sea, birds of the air, by law
Ye seized, God's gift to all, within your harpy claw."

L.

" And yet by angel feet is marked for you
A pathway, when ye shall 'gainst Death have fought,
Abjuring Sin, whence ye the Isles may view,
Fortunate Isles, where penitents resort,
And moor beside the wharf of Heaven's port.
Now Gog, stand forth! Of murder thou'rt accused,
And that thou didst 'gainst man with Satan plot,

With Satan 'gainst thy God, and hast abused
Thy power, and through the earth thy wolves and vultures loosed."

LI.

"An expiation, almost infinite,
In the cimmerian crucible of Hell,
Dark with the dreadful of perpetual night,
With thine own peccant thoughts alone to dwell,
And to thyself thy heinous deeds to tell,
Awaits thee for thy gross atrocities,
Remorseless, and thy frauds so terrible;
Thou murdered'st with thy heart, thy tongue, thine eyes,
Worse than thy slaughtering sword were thy hypocrisies."

LII.

"Thou wast an alien spirit on the earth,
Demon, scarce human; all thy world to thee
Was fastuous pomp, all else was nothing worth:
Son of perdition and iniquity!
Monster of reprobate humanity!
The curse of kingdoms ruined, and the groan
Of nations massacred, the piercing cry
Of widows and of orphans, left undone,
The suicide's last shriek, have reached my Father's Throne."

LIII.

"Hence shalt thou, with the suicide's despair,
Frantic seek death, and never death shalt find;
Waste with the winter of the widow's care,

Snatching at hopes, the nightmares of the mind,
That flit as shadows in the starving wind;
With the sad orphan's desolation pine,
And moralize how pride of power is blind;
Until thy fallen state to grace incline,
Of evil dispossessed, when pardon shall be thine."

LIV.

"Oh! hide me from my shame!" the penitent
Frenzied implores, in miserable plight;
"But whither shall I fly from punishment
Justly deserved? Not darkness from Thy sight
Can screen me; darkness is to Thee as light;
Thine eye is everywhere. I cannot brook
The thunder of Thy brow; Hell's blackest night
Frights less than Thy serenity of look,
And worse than penal torture stings Thy sharp
rebuke."

LV.

"Thy lust was cruel, savage was thy rage,
Fierce thy ambition, careless what it cost
Of tribulations sore thy wars to wage;
But the worst crime for which thy soul is lost
Is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost,"
Rejoined the Arbiter; "Yet to thine own
Liberal thou wert, and when in danger most
Most valiant, and though pompous on thy throne,
Yet strict and often just, which part thy doom atone."

LVI.

"As for thee, Ryno, because thou didst spur
Thy master to malicious hate, accursed

With bloodshed, Hell shall be thy sepulchre;
Where, for the offense of sacrilege, the first
In magnitude, exorbitant, and the worst,
Thou shalt be, until ages shall have passed,
In purgatorial fires of Sheol immersed,
And bleach and chasten in its glacial blast,
When thou shalt find a truce from chastisement at last."

LVII.

"Ye despots, who had trampled civic rights
Under your feet, ye sultans, sophis, czars,
Whose quarrels bred exterminating fights,
Marauding sheiks, and plundering thanes, on wars
Ever intent, against you Heaven bars
Its golden lintels; on you shuts the door
Of mercy, nor the lictor's fasces spares,
Luxurious sovereigns, who devoured the poor,
And parasites, who preyed upon the people's store."

LVIII.

"Ye cassocked servants of the arch-fiend liar,
Orthodox inquisitors, who consigned
Thousands of fellow creatures to the fire,
To please your malice, not to save mankind,
Else to perdition forfeit, nor a kind
God that is merciful avenge, your boast!
What you awarded is to you assigned,
Retributive prescription, to be tost
In livid flames, consumed with Hell's obnoxious host!"

LIX.

"Imposters of all sorts, thou hierarch,
Who cozened men by teaching fabled creeds,
Thou glozing demagogue, and false anarch,
Thou pander to the lordling's beastly deeds,
Thou caterer to priestcraft's craving greeds,
Thou pimp to kinglet's lust, thou cruel cheat,
Who rifled'st poverty of nature's needs,
Thou pious hypocrite, demure and sweet,
Who gav'st a prayer to him who, hungry, asked for meat:"

LX.

"Ye may have colleges and churches built,
Donated tithes of chattels to the poor;
Ye may have monuments in temples gilt,
And carved pantheons raised; but of your store
Ye nothing granted: if your hands did shower
Largess on largess, yet your hearts gave nought,
Your gifts were bargains but to gain you more;
To pillage and purloin was all your thought;
Down to the infernal gulf, all ye who ruin wrought."

LXI.

"Michael, lead thy patrols these evil hosts
Of earthlings to escort to lethal Hell,
Beyond the borders where the starry coasts
To seas of chaos trend, the ranks to swell
Of devils damned, in dungeon caves to dwell."
A moment all was still the dome beneath
Of vaulted skies, silenced by terror's spell,

Then throbbed the heart, and gasped the hurried
breath,
And screamed the crowd aghast, and cried for instant
death:

LXII.

And there were wailings, wringings of the hands,
And dumb despair, of crushing hopes the wreck,
The death of death, as intercepting bands
Of seraphs wheeled, their vain escape to check,
And, closing on them, drove them heels and neck,
Down the precipitous descent, down deep,
Unfathomable chasms; down their ranks break
Through the crystalline gates of air, and leap
Sheer in the hollow void, and firths of chaos sweep.

LXIII.

And falling headlong in the mob were seen
Bonzes and dervishes, the archimage,
Pope, cardinal and canon, king and queen,
Archbishop, chamberlain, dean, duke, count, page,
The courtly beauty, and the cloistered sage,
Lord chancellor, high judge, chief magistrate,
The theologian, for polemic rage
Notorious, sectarist for cleric hate,
The tyrant, famed on earth for regions desolate;

LXIV.

The dastard pedagogue, who children beat,
Yet trembled at a man; bum-bailiff vile,
Who fawned upon some rector-squire with sweet
Lips, that dropped meanness as anointing oil;

The critic, who with asses' milk sucked bile;
The black-mail editor, bribed to abuse,
The wappened wench, too coy and prude to smile;
The gypsum-vending baker, and the spruce
Tapster, who Bedlam sold in palsy, and madness brews.

LXV.

There was the Conqueror, the bastard son
Of a long line of pirates, scion true
Of robbers, and of thieves the paragon;
And round him fell an iron-kilted crew,
The bandits, from whom British nobles drew
Lineal descent, with vanity and pride
Boasting of bird-claw hand, and blood that's blue,
The current that with brother's murder dyed
Cain's arteries, to whiten laundried in Hell's tide.

LXVI.

There was the king, with lion's heart ferocious,
The savage, who was tamed by poesy,
Famous for paynim massacres atrocious,
Who yet could in a lady's bower sigh,
And lilt her charms in polished melody;
A tender troubadour, a faithful knight,
A warrior bold, and a brave enemy;
Inflamed to cruel fury in the fight,
By turns a cooing dove, and then a taloned kite:

LXVII.

And there, too, was his vicious brother, who
Was false to his own country, and his crown,
To profligate ambition only true,

A sot, a glutton, and a boorish clown,
Perfidious kinsman, and rebellious son;
The conqueror of Wales, and Scotia's scourge,
The vanquisher of Gaul, at Cresсy won,
From out the thick impacted shapes emerge,
As rolls the tide of guilt in heaving surge on surge.

LXVIII.

The valiant Harry, who at Agincourt
Leveled again the chivalry of France,
The rival Roses, with their long escort
Of outlawed barons, who on spear and lance
Their fortunes trusted, in the dark expanse
Of perils plunge; as on the battle-field,
Now dashes Gloster, with a loathing glance
On Richmond following, no more to wield
Sceptre or sword, and thrones on palace craft to build.

LXIX.

Reft of his frippery and fatal lust,
The turgid Tudor, prone amid the throng
Sprawls, as though wallowing in blood and dust;
And his hag daughters, mitred priests among,
Cursing their counselors with evil tongue:
The brutal Jefferies, the ogre-ghoul
Of English law, glares frantically along
The reeling columns, and beneath his cowl
Fierce Torquemada cowers amid the sinking scull.

LXX.

Stuarts, obnoxious for their quibbling lies,
Equivocating trust, and crooked zeal,

Flounder through freezing snow and fire-hail skies:
And he, their huge dread, of the common weal
More than a monarch, with his heart of steel,
And adamantine hand, now shrunken weak,
Rushes headlong where squadrons thickest wheel,
And a cry, choked, or it had been a shriek,
Moans sternly wild, as though that heart would burst-
ing break.

LXXI.

There the sad prince, a stranger to the land
He came to save, still melancholy and wan,
Feels he's an alien mid the wretched band;
Yet deeds of shame from better fate him ban.
And there is he who from his shadow ran,
So wrinkled and decayed; yet he had been
In youthful prime the model of a man,
The hired Eros of a strumpet quean,
And yet in feats of arms an Ares in his sheen.

LXXII.

Swift as they fly as swift the guard pursues
With whips of scorpions, and with stripes lays on
The howling she-wolf of Bartholomew's
Infamous murders, and her zany son;
Pizarro, Innocent, and Montfort run
Before the lashing thongs that crack of doom:
Now are avenged the "Children of the Sun,"
And Albigensian slaughters: but the tomb
Of Erebus wide yawns the ruin to inhume.

LXXIII.

His throne now leaving, with a brow demure,
Yet proud, though meek, up to the Seat Supreme,
Where sat Jehovah in effulgence pure,
And whence around the rippling glories stream,
And on the faces of blest angels beam,
Repairs the Judge, and thus his Sire divine
Addresses: "My awards are just, I deem,
Because I sought Thy will, which still is mine,
And their eventual good whom I to wrath consign."

HELL AND HEAVEN.

CANTO XII.

I.

SCARCE was the sentence on the Sons of Death
Pronounced, ere from its spinning axis reeled
The pole sidereal, thunder's awful breath
Roared horrid discord, martial trumpets pealed,
And troops of angels in wide crescent wheeled
Around the host condemned, in agony
Of curdling terror, as they saw revealed
Hell's bottomless perdition, and the sea
Of fire unquenchable, the seat of misery.

II.

A hurricane arose with scudding rack,
And flaming typhoons blew, and a hoarse voice
Scraiched the death-rattle, as the ruin black
Swept down the precipice amid the noise
Of demon laughter chuckling, shook with joys
Grim and ferocious: Sin the mocking shout,
Discomfited, returns with shrieks and sighs,
And with her snaky tresses round about
Her shadowy skull disheveled, leads the hideous rout.

III.

Down from the azure cope in the abyss
They headlong plunge, urged by the griding spear,
The dart and sword cherubic, in the hiss
Of pyramids of fire that lap the air
And suck them dropping from the hollow sphere
Of skies disgorging loads on ponderous loads,
An avalanche of life, appalled with fear,
Maelstroms of horrors thick, by scorpion goads
Driven to burning pits, Briarean abodes.

IV.

Torrents of molten ore volcanoes spout,
Hell's sacrificial altar, to a plain,
Where the ordeal deluge winds about
Till it debouches in the lake of pain:
Millions of ghosts within the reeking main
Are flung to welter in the penal waves,
Soddered and brazed, in durance to remain,
And thence removed to freeze in icy caves,
For ages numberless to be their prison graves.

V.

And whirlpools churn the currents when the surges,
Spent with their rage, would settle to a calm,
And the conflagrant blast tempestuous urges
The lambent tide with bluster to alarm
The spirits free from momentary harm:
None can in anodyne lethean rest,
None in forgetfulness can taste the balm
Of sleep's nepenthe, by the rollers pressed,
That lash them with their out-stretched arms and foaming crest.

VI.

Or when the anger of the Omnipotent
Kindles afresh, with sevenfold fury blows
The torrid turmoil, and the flaw is sent
In red hot hail, and showers of frozen snows,
Inflicting inextinguishable woes,
With stings of anguish, until then unknown,
And plagues, unfelt before, which rack with throes,
Within, without, and tame and harrow down
The choler of their pride when too rebellious grown.

VII.

Almost the darkness simmering can be heard,
And the thick twilight felt as grains of sand;
The heat smarts sore, as a sharp trenchant sword,
A blister on the brain, or skull trepanned,
Or quivering heart torn out by bloody hand,
Or tingling nerve or marrow's piercing thrill:
The seething ocean and the smoking land
Curses and groans and lamentations fill
And "Sabacthani" loud resounds from plain and hill.

VIII.

The very air is saturated blaze,
And droves of scyllas haunt the death domain;
Hope turns her back with shuddering amaze,
Love, faithful still before, now shuns the den,
And leaves the helpless victim to complain;
No service renders Friendship to the wretch;
Despair, Remorse, and Fear, alone remain;
And though to centuries the calends stretch,
Yet no respite for them, and no release they fetch.

IX.

There is no fellowship of Sin with Evil,
No sympathy of Suffering with Pain,
But devil hates intense his neighbor devil,
And man abominates with haught disdain,
Who from his busy rancor flies in vain;
All find a sort of dull narcotic rest
In worrying one another in the main
Of rueful tribulation. How unblest
That dole should follow dole with such malignant zest!

X.

But the worst torture of the gnawing worm
Is shame and self-reproach, that represent
Their past transgressions living to alarm
The sentry of the conscience, impotent
To struggle with obtrusive memories sent,
Inseparable from guilt, its native bane,
Its ministers uncouth of chastisement:
So dreams disjoint us paralysed with pain,
When wassail and debauch the strength corporeal drain.

XI.

Here is amerced and punished every deed,
In crime's dark catalogue, a monstrous brood;
Envy that made his prosperous rival bleed,
Revenge that thirsted for offending blood,
And gentle love the cause of deadly feud;
The lust of conquest and of lordly power,
Converting states into a solitude;

And rage fanatic, that would curses shower,
And persecute and kill a bigot church to dower.

XII.

Here lingers in the pang impaled of death
The murderer; for, still ordained to live,
He gasps convulsive, with expiring breath,
Without the hope of dying, to survive
For ages, but never from his eyes to drive
The Shadow gaunt, who stealing to his side,
Brandishes aloft his barbed dart to give
The fatal blow, then stabs the homicide,
Till from his breast wells out the palpitating tide.

XIII.

Accoutred in tasselled gown is Shalmaneser,
And coiffed in chevelure of plaited rows;
And busked in purple, many an orient Cæsar;
And midst them the Chaldean conqueror goes,
With moonstruck phrenzy on his shaggy brows,
The king who fed on grass, whose brutal face
Still shows his beast's heart: from impending blows
Through the fire-waves distractedly they race,
While threatening idols born of their own thoughts them chase.

XIV.

From out an opened flood-gate furious sweep
The wraiths of murdered babes, and swift pursue
A crowned and sceptred quarry through the deep
Sluices of scalding blood, with wild halloo,

As linnets hunt the hawk, whose bill they rue:
They shoot the skies, dart down abysses hollow;
Fear strides the van, with nightmare and a crew
Of hideous lamias, ouphes and urchins follow,
Till quagmire's jaws cerberean them benighted
swallow.

XV.

Where down a precipice a cascade falls
Of flames stupendous dashing on their way,
In a hot brew of foam, o'er beetling walls,
Niagaras of fires, Hell's auto-da-fé,
The thieves are forced in the fermenting spray,
Through swirling linns and rapids boiling round,
And eddies breaking on the shingly bay;
While earthquake mine beneath the silted ground,
And burst through iron caves with a Titanic bound.

XVI.

Here are decreed to suffer, who on earth
Had orphans spoiled, and filched the widow's
store,
And left them languishing, in daily dearth,
To fat on fare would starve the parish poor;
Who to the midnight burglar had the door
Oped for a bribe; of bankrupts many there,
Who bartered honest sums to swindle more,
And cheats who 'd dealt in counterfeited ware,
Compelled to breathe of sublimated gold the air.

XVII.

The railway kings crowned with their wreaths of
smoke,
And bankers flying from dishonored notes,

And fraudful audits; ravishers who broke,
Wild dogs, the hurdles of the shepherd's cotes,
And ruthless ripped the gold-fleeced lambkin's throats,
Bloodhounds of Mammon; mothers who had taught
Their daughters sin to fill their own flesh-pots,
And pimps and bauds, who had for lucre wrought
Wantonness, and inveigled youth, to ruin brought.

XVIII.

The knavish proctor, who had titles forged,
Self-righteous priest, too snug to mind his fold,
The doctor, who on fees of death had gorged,
All who had cooked accounts, or sweated gold,
And measled creeds for sound religion sold;
Uncles, who had their nephew's portion taken
By legal quibble or manouver bold,
Fathers who had their helpless sons forsaken,
And sons their aged sires all to these torments waken.

XIX.

Fast by through smoke is seen a cañon wild,
Whose brow a monumental calf of gold
Surmounts, the same, whose image had defiled
Decrepid nations, who debased had told
Allegiance sordid to the bovine mold;
At Thebes and Memphis first with vows implored,
And then at Horeb worshipped of old,
But now is Christendom's incarnate word,
The gilded lie at Court, in change, and church adored.

XX.

But who is this most miserable man?
'Tis Mudson, who in flesh had passed to be
A saint among the puritanic clan,
Who patronize a trading Deity,
And at his mercenary markets buy
Exclusive favors; who a trumpet sound
When they're accouched of still-born charity,
Or to their fetish tabernacle bound;
Calumnious Pharisees, who worth intrinsic wound.

XXI.

With unctuous self-praise—"I thank thee, Lord, that I
Am not as that poor penitent who sits,
And prays in secret; but I publicly
Adore Thee in Thy sanctuary, where meets
Thine only true church, who my largess greets
With loud applause, without suspicious qualms:
As the lamb, trustful, to the butcher bleats,
So the world bleats to him, who, giving alms,
Prepares to stab them, singing philanthropic psalms."

XXII.

"Judas betrayed his master with a kiss,
And sold him to the priests, but I would sell
The priests themselves, our Bethel, all that is
Revered and holy, Heaven itself, to Hell;
It is my business, which I know full well.
Skillful in wily arts, I glibly make
Hypocrisy upon my tongue to dwell,
And guilty vice the mask of virtue take,
And am the thing I'm not for my own profit's sake."

XXIII.

"At every mission meeting of our guild
To spread the gospel into foreign lands,
I'm chairman, chapels for the poor I build
That pay me ten per cent., teetotal bands,
And orphan schools employ my picking hands,
And hospitals and magdalens; I am
Constructor of fine ropes of twisted sands,
Contractor for all works that are a flam,
The president or director bribed of every sham."

XXIV.

"What if I ruin thousands? I don't hear
The widow's wail, and orphan's whining moan;
The threatenings of the crowd I'll learn to bear,
And soon will get accustomed to their groan,
While in my coach I'll drive to Windsor's Throne."
Such was the cant discourse, on earth the boast
Of this predacious reptile, doomed to won
The sewers where his despicable ghost
Gropes through the dark in vain to search for treasures lost.

XXV.

Whence is that scream terrific that I hear,
Echoed by howling caverns? Hark! it sweeps,
Soaring and dying in the foggy air;
Low as the call of storms it moaning creeps,
Loud as the roaring cataract it leaps,
And bursts in thunder claps! Again the shriek
Frightens all hell. It is a ghost that weeps,
Who fain the memory of the past would seek
To sever from the thoughts that retribution wreak.

XXVI.

"Oh! why pursue me thus?" The phantom cries,
"Oh! why pursue me with thy pale wan face,
Smiling reproaches on me? with thine eyes
Look not so on me! In thy form I trace,
Though wasted now, thy beauty's virgin grace,
Soiled by my lying love and guilty faith—
Curse me, and leave me to deserved disgrace!
Blast me, but bless me not, with thy sweet breath,
Whose lust abandoned thee to suicidal death!"

XXVII.

And wild again the yell ascended high,
And silenced every other sound of fear.
But now behold the alcoholic sty,
As from the fosse the pungent vapors clear,
Engendering plagues, what loathsome brutes appear,
In death delirious. Gangs of fiends fill
The brimming flagons from the dripping mere,
That filters solvent flames as from a still,
And give the ghosts to drink the caustic sure to kill.

XXVIII.

A drop of water on the finger's tip
In that hour's horrid agony were worth
To lave the burning eschar of the lip
All the rich gems and treasures of the earth;
And as they swill loud bursts the demon mirth,
Laughter uproarious, gibes and fleering taunts,
That loose the hanging cliffs throughout the girth,

Where Tophet walls her melancholy haunts,
And Death through livid gloom his flaming banner
flaunts.

XXIX.

In dizzy circles, caught by eddying winds,
And tost unceasingly, till senseless numbed,
Through whirling ashes drifts the Liar, and finds
No intermission to his sentence, doomed
To gyrate, in a cyclone's vortex tombed,
Blown by the storm aloft athwart the sky,
Unpitied, unreprieved, till are consumed
The tardy hours throughout eternity,
When exorcising prayers lay his iniquity.

XXX.

Vile is the fætor of the lazar-house,
Where huddled in pollution spirits lay,
Repulsive, rank, obscene, and hideous,
Cisterns of foul corruption in decay,
Once sweet and balmy as the bloom of May,
Their father's joy, their mother's dearest pride,
Now shivering and shrinking in dismay:
These are the harlots who had crucified
All sense of honest shame, and had adulterous died.

XXXI.

Like corpses that have green and yellow grown
These trulls have turned, to flabby wrinkles worn,
Or with a blotched and bloated visage blown,
Whose amber tresses leprosy has shorn,
Whose vermeil cheek the mangy tetter torn,

And on whose bosoms Ophiusas crawl,
Besmearing charms once fair as blushing morn,
Till Dian swat with heat venereal,
When sighs of rapture melted into tears of gall.

XXXII.

Over the stygian lake in sooty air,
On wings of immolating hatred fly,
To battle in the incandescent glare,
Voluminous armies through the sweltry sky,
That heaves with sedulous hostility:
The rolling squadrons serried columns smash,
And deadly weapons in the combat ply,
With oaths and mutual imprecations lash
Their spectral steeds of flame, and on each other dash.

XXXIII.

They drink the fiery samiel, they stamp the cloud
Till struck ignited in their thirst for blood,
And mid the swindging smoke of thunders loud,
Savaged with slaughter, in the dubious feud
For ages struggle: where their cohorts stood
In centuries gone by there still will stand
In arms arrayed, the ghastly multitude,
Still to contend in air as erst on land,
Under some human king or conqueror's command.

XXXIV.

In the commotion Attila and Tamerlane
Lead their battalions, and Sesostris fights
With Alaric, the Goth, o'er mounds of slain,
Devoured by screaming flocks of phantom kites;
Again the tatooed cannibal delights

To quaff from simulacred skulls the gore
Of fallen foes; again the mildew blights
The ghosts of harvests on the blasted shore,
Struck with the curse of plagues and grinding famine sore.

XXXV.

Beyond the slime pits and the sleechy moats
Extend wide realms of ever-during gloom,
Where a blear light, that blinds the ether, floats,
And meteors moony-eyed the night illume,
But never suns, or stars, or planets loom;
There mountain ranges in sierras rise,
Sterile with ochreous ore and scurfy bloom,
With glacier summits to the boreal skies,
An unpropitious spot of gelid miseries.

XXXVI.

Here are enjoined in spasm to be congealed
False witnesses who'd sworn a life away,
Like mammoths in Siberian ice concealed,
With stounds of pain to shiver in dismay,
Crystaled to living breme without decay;
And as the snow flakes silent fall and slow,
In swan-down swimming in the dusky ray,
Dream-peopled with their victims in the throe
Of felon's death, they feel themselves the felon's woe.

XXXVII.

Here are confined the kinsmen who had put
Their relatives within the madhouse den,
That with their patrimony they might glut
Their appetite for power, or lust, or gain,

To be afflicted with demented brain;
And all abettors in the fiendish deed,
Physicians bribed to swear the sane insane,
Wardens suborned, police and valets feed,
And all the callous rogues who'd learned the devil's creed.

XXXVIII.

The spume of salivating simony
Here candies, who had piety blasphemed,
By Belial surplicing with sanctity,
Who even God to wheedle slyly schemed,
With nothing that his venal heart redeemed:
Ribbed in the burning rime of winter snell,
Till but an icicle the imposter seemed,
Was Gog, imprisoned in this saddest Hell,
His slogan now no longer fierce and terrible.

XXXIX.

A moan scarce audible the creeping air,
Crisping to hoar-frost, as a feather stirs,
A sob that swoons to sighing in despair,
As when a fly in cobweb tangled whirs,
Or his torn shard a wounded beetle birrs:—
"O for a moment of the raging fire
That kindles life, although it nature blurs,
One red-hot blast to breathe, and then expire,
Rather than fossilize in petrifying mire!"

XL.

Here, coffined too beside him, Ryno lies
Conscious of life, yet feeling he is dead,

Throughout one lengthened day of heavenly skies,
Marked by the zodiac's gnomon o'er his head,
While the remotest constellations tread
Their paths orbicular, till zoic rays
Traveling for eons, on him torpid shed,
Near moribund, a vivifying blaze,
And thaw the mausoleum that on him ponderous lays.

XLI.

When Justice punishes His rod reforms!
To punish everlastingly would be
Not to abolish sin in wretched worms,
But leave them hopeless in its custody,
And alienated with severity,
To harden, not improve, and make of Him
Who is Love, Mercy, Truth, and Charity,
A Saturn, Juggernaut, or Moloch grim,
Whom the ascetic misanthrope delights to limn.

XLII.

Shall God be more vindictive and less just
Than man, whose unrelenting polity
Measures his finite wrath, and curbs his lust
Of rigid vengeance? With thy cruelty
Charge not thy Maker! with thy bigotry
Doom not thy brother! but let humble prayer,
The child of penitence, thy herald be,
Thy burden to the Throne of Grace to bear,
Thy "miserere," but of Shimei's fate beware!

XLIII.

The devils their probationary term
Imposed propitiate, constrained to endure
The sateless fang of the "Undying Worm,"
Till fire and frost anneal to metal pure
The smelted ore, when frost and fire immure
No longer instincts drawn to native skies;
Then hopes, like rising stars, to Heaven allure
The aspiration of their sympathies,
And dreams of joy foreshadow their realities.

XLIV.

The pulse of every unbecoming thought
Has ceased to beat, no longer lowers a frown
Darkening the cheek of death, the ill they sought
They now would shun, cast-iron smiles are flown,
And the bronze sneer, for they are honest grown;
The wedding-day of Heaven and Hell is come,
The storms of Winter far away have blown,
And as the cankered buds to flowrets bloom,
Life as a new braird springs beyond their opened tomb.

XLV.

They change their smutty flames for solar beams,
While a delicious spirit in them glides;
Their errors moulted, through the dawning gleams,
Fledged with new faith, they skim the rippling tides
Of ocean-worlds, led by a voice that guides,
Voice of the Morning Star, to Paradise,
Where the Apocalypse of Love abides:

They upward gaze at Thee, Oh God, with sighs,
And down Thou smiling look'st on them with gracious eyes.

XLVI.

Up to the glory of the Eternal King,
Up where the skies are melting into light,
Hell, disenthralled from death, on eyrie wing
Springs from the dens of shame and caves of night,
Till ope the pearl-gates on their dazzled sight:
Omnipotence they view ensphered in bliss,
Effusing Urim Thummim of delight,
That gladdens as it gilds the dark abyss,
And Sin emparadised leaves Hell's necropolis.

XLVII.

"Let there be Light!" said the Creative Power;
"Let there be Love!" commands Preserving Grace;
And from celestial roses falls a shower
From cassia, myrrh, and aloes, on each face,
Of heart-bloom through the theatre of space:
This, this is Life, and not the tomb-like shade,
When human souls on sad earth ran their race,
We but begin to live when we are laid
In the sweet tomb of rest, in bridal robes arrayed.

XLVIII.

They Him discern in spirit as He is
To spirits visible, without a veil,
Emblazed with beatific sanctities
That shrine excessive Godhead: senses quail

Before the vision, sight and hearing fail,
And they would sink to primal nothingness,
But that the effluent virtue they inhale,
The Real Presence, strengthens feebleness,
And in that trance they win immortal happiness.

XLIX.

Eternities of bliss are hence their own;
They cannot speak, but only feel their joy,
Like the electric touch of the loved one,
The incalculable depth of ecstasy,
Enchantment of a Heavenly faery:
Their souls now penetrate the soul of things
Farther than ever telescope can see;
They love all life, and soaring on the wings
Of reason, leave behind infirm imaginings.

L.

Hence angels, men, and demons brothers are,
The children of One Parent Good, who guards
All from the lapse to sin: from star to star
His Omnipresent Eye no world discards
Because 'tis evil; but all Heaven-wards
They tend to Him together, and the highest
Life is the consciousness of His regards,
Most perfect that which is to Him the nighest,
And from Thy Mercy Seat, well pleased, to all Thou criest:—

LI.

" My Holy Tabernacle is with you,
And I will tarry with you here, and ye

With hearts confiding, and with conscience true,
Shall be aneled with Chrism of Charity,
Still to be better, still to wiser be,
And death shall not be known here any more,
For death is swallowed up in victory,
And Anger on you shall not shut the door:
Is not My Pity infinite, as is My Power?"

LII.

"Too just to cruel be, too merciful
Without reclaiming to correct, I am
The Inexhaustible of Love, still full,
Though always giving. How could Justice damn
Crimes expiated; faults atoned condemn
To retribution's fiery glaive forever?
Your faith no longer trials shall o'erwhelm;
But ye shall drink the waters of the river,
And eat the bread of Life, of which I am the Giver."

LIII.

"I made you not to make you miserable,
Nor fashioned ye to be the prey of death!
That were inequitable, intolerable:
To censure and upbraid with hostile breath,
And castigate with unforgiving wrath,
Is not Love's office, who indulgent loves
His fallen children, and forever hath
His mercy in remembrance; He improves
Commisserating whom His chastisement reproves."

LIV.

"Oh! taste and see that I, the Lord, am good!
If the Creator of all life, yet still

Created in my own similitude ;
Of all I am the Father, to fulfill
A father's part, and not the soul to kill,
Infanticidal, with the penalty
Of everlasting, unmitigated ill,
Only conceived by man's infirmity:
I knew that ye were dust, and could not sunshine be."

LV.

"My fan has purged Hell's floor, the winnowed wheat
I've stacked within my granary, but spurned
The chaff as worthless; with the Paraclete
I have baptised you clean till ye have turned
Pure as the gold refined that's seven times burned:
Ye are alive who were in sin once dead;
The lost are found; the Prodigal's returned
Back to his Father's House, whence he had fled:
Clothe him with purple robes, and crown his sacred head."

LVI.

Thus from His cloud of light in glory shrined,
Expressed His love dimensionless the Lord,
Beyond all thought unutterably kind:
The Grace of smiling skies, collateral Word,
Beneficent, once flesh, his victor's sword
Presenting low, thus answered:—" How benign
Is the enormous boon which we have heard
Thy lips pronounce! in bliss how boundless Thine
Unintercepted bounty! Glad, I now resign,"

LVII.

"Since Death is overcome, and Sin subdued,
My throne and sceptre and the rule restore
To me entrusted of the true and good,
The excellent of earth, who patient bore
Through trials testimony to the power
Of Love no persecution could appal,
And lived in vestal virtue evermore:
Again I'm subject unto Thee, and shall
With all be subject that Thou mayst be All in All."

LVIII.

"Salvation to our God which sitteth on
The Seat of Mercy, and unto the Lamb!"
Respond the saints around the living Throne;
"Blessing and honor to Thy holy name!
Glory and thanksgiving unto him who came
From Thee Thy Prophet unto us our Friend,
Our faults to cancel and repeal our shame!
Before the footstool of Thy Grace we bend,
And laud Thy wisdom, love, and power without end."

LIX.

Now the grand secret absolute of truth,
The Secret Name 's disclosed; now love becomes
Their very life, etherealized in youth,
That with the beautiful of holy blooms,
Which sin, the canker-worm, no more consumes;
For Love is strength divine, since God is Love!
Each heart a sacrificial altar fumes
For others' peace, and Innocence, the Dove,
No longer dreads the lurking Snake of Eden's grove.

LX.

If fears inspired the thoughts of those who lived
In mortal clay, hopes are henceforth the dreams
Of souls evangelized, who death survived,
Repentant and respited; now with beams
They shine illustrious from the crystal streams
Of Goodness, never but immaculate;
And as the bright quintessence on them teems,
Demons burst from their chrysalis of hate,
And, crawled from sin's cocoon, men rise regenerate.

LXI.

Love drapes their world with beauty: here to breathe
Is rapture, here to feel is perfect bliss,
And here to think is knowledge, truth, and faith.
Is God a myth? Is Heaven a mirage? Is
Death but the Life's last, lingering, parting kiss,
Ere it dissolve to nothing, or a shade
Haunting the catacombs or the abyss
Beyond this terrene orb? So the fool said,
In pride of learning, which is wisdom's masquerade.

LXII.

Behold descending from the plastic sky
The New Jerusalem, whose light divine
Flows as a Fountain from the Throne on High,
In silver streamers as auroras shine,
Or golden glitter of aventurine;
The walls and turret battlements around
With coronals adorned, a jeweled mine,
Steeples with diamonds, domes with rubies crowned,
And cupolas with chrysolite and agate bound.

LXIII.

Wide sloping uplands hem the city in
With zones of verdure in many a fringed fold;
Such scenes as in our dreams we may have seen;
And, sunned in gladness, hill, and dell, and wold
Float in an atmosphere that flows with gold;
A wilderness of bloom with manna dews
The fields impearl, the hazy beaches hold
Oceans of dreamy islets, whither fuse
The amber tide and rosy mist in blended hues.

LXIV.

Soft soothing airs fan with their downy plume,
Scented with flowered ambrosia, summer seas;
There 's holy music in the zephyr's hum,
The dimple of the wavelet sings of peace:
Here spirits meditate their phantasies
Through the repose serene of Sabbath hours;
Or loll on banks of asphodel at ease,
Where streams of nacre glide by emerald bowers,
Rivers of Bliss that lap the foot of starry towers.

LXV.

No noxious plants nor thorny shrubs grow there,
Nor drastic sap corrosive oozes out
Venom, but precious gums and balsams rare
Distil the Trees of Life, and shed about
Vermilion fruitage, sapid to the gout,
Luscious to smell, alluring to the sight;
No midnight revel, and no tempest rout
Inspiring, but the sense of dulcet light,
And consciousness existence is unmixed delight.

LXVI.

This is our Father's House, where spiritual
Embodied shapes, in snooded sunbeams sweet,
Through viridescent park and floral hall
Perambulate, with concourse of blest feet,
And foes on earth as friends in Heaven meet:
They dive the gulfs, they winnow the abyss,
And as they shave the clouds each other greet;
With veins of lightning run in giddy bliss,
And everywhere they go they find new pleasure is.

LXVII.

They bathe in moonshine dew and saffron fire,
They quaff the aeromel of rainbow-showers,
The violet breath of virgin spring respire,
And on the otto suck of odorous flowers;
They're clothed in light, and lodge in rose-bloom bowers;
And wonder at their bliss, not as on earth,
A glimpse of summer set in winter hours,
But the whole photosphere of moral worth,
A Heaven star-sweet of love, a Paradise of mirth.

LXVIII.

Now unimpressionable to attractive force,
Past infinite of space the spirits wend
With inconceivable dispatch their course,
Omniscience to interpret without end,
Wherever embassies of love them send:
The silence that was never spelled of death
Articulates what never mortal penned,
Of archetypes primordial communeth,
And miracles of speech that living pictures breathe:

LXIX.

And faith is hence converted into sight,
What was belief is certain knowledge now;
The secret imageries are in light
Engraven, and the graphic tablets show
The enigma solved of mortal joy and woe;
The link within us to the world without,
Life, death, and how the mind began to grow,
And how it is immortal, so that doubt
Is realized in fact, and every truth found out.

LXX.

Sometimes remembrances of earthly dole,
Mementoes of oblivion, cast a shade,
But for a moment only, on the soul,
And then the living who had once been dead
Seem as in cold mortality were laid;
But soon the smiles of care-unclouded skies
A May-day over melancholy shed;
Love carves no more their epitaph in sighs,
Dreams of the heart grieve not o'er tender memories.

LXXI.

Now the once frantic doating mother finds
Her long-lost babe, who had in visions blessed
Her mundane slumbers, and around him winds
Her arms till he is mortised to her breast;
The crown of their fond esperance possessed,
The youth and maiden's blasted loves embrace,
Nor fear by fate unkind to be oppressed;
Parted in sorrow, but without a trace
Of sadness now, but bright with beatific grace.

LXXII.

Imbosomed in a paradise of bliss,
They think no more of joy that is to be
The heart's-ease of desire, but never is;
The ignis-fatuus of felicity,
Love's shadow that on earth doth ever flee,
Yet followeth always after earthly love,
Since Eden's trespass banished to the sky;
Twinned at one birth in some amrita grove,
Love tarried here with men, but joy sojourned above.

LXXIII.

Here are the martyrs who for truth had died;
Here are the heroes who had conquered wrong;
The poor who had by griping want been tried,
Yet railed not, carping with abusive tongue,
But whispered, "Salve" to the rich and strong;
Patrician squires who had been bountiful
Their indigent plebeian hinds among;
The wise who had been honest to the fool;
The creditor who had been kind and merciful.

LXXIV.

More potent now for good is the poor slave
Than e'er his hard task-master was for ill;
The ignorant are erudite, cowards brave,
The meek and pure grow meeker, purer still,
With ampler piety the pious thrill;
They who had filled on earth a point in time,
Now a distinguished circlet round them fill:
Their deeds illustrious and their words sublime
Through the wide courts of Fame angelic anthems chime.

LXXV.

Hark the names chanted on the illumined scroll,
In thunders echoing, "Florence Nightingale!"
And still the thunderous echoes onward roll,
"Whose mission was to solace human bale,
Thee first and chief of pitying saints we hail;
And Sarah Martin, sister-seraph, we
Crown with a chaplet that shall never pale,
And with the garment clothe of sanctity,
For rich with sterling love was thy philanthropy."

LXXVI.

"To Elizabeth Fry like honor we accord;
Three graces of your sex, whom sorrow blessed,
And thought her guardian angels, whose soft word
Of comfort was as sweet as balmy rest
To vigils by the fever's fire oppressed:
Judicious benefactors of the poor!
Kind nurses of the sick! So bends her breast
The mother to her frail child, loved the more,
And feeds its wasting life from her maternal store."

LXXVII.

"Love was the life-pulse of your genial souls,
Unselfish, pure, divinity enshrined
In holy temples. When immured in goals,
Or laid in spitals, Madness closed the blind
And shutters o'er the window of the mind,
On hope's death-bed resigned to blank despair,
At your approach with consolations kind
The light returned; then ceased corroding care
To feel its pangs, and Heaven invoked in grateful prayer."

LXXVIII.

"And Vincent, Howard, Peabody, and Guy,
Clarkson, and Mill, who to the felon lost
And Ethiop drudge, of base humanity
The outcast and the martyr, and the host
Of fortune's serfs, by fate or folly crossed,
Opened your hands and souls your hearts to prove
By noble works, nor made your deeds your boast,
Inhabit the abodes for which ye strove,
The everlasting realms of charitable love."

LXXIX.

"Hail Garibaldi! and hail Washington!
Patriots ye were, and monarchs scorned to be:
If ye on earth have reputation won,
Because unpaid ye set your peoples free,
Here the complacence of the Deity
Shall be your fame. Yours are these lustrous bays,
Wear them as meeds of your integrity!
Hence angel minstrels shall record your praise,
For to your country ye were faithful found always."

LXXX.

"And hail to thee, thou firm-souled President,
Thou second Washington, whose fortitude,
To the oppressed and scourged a ransom sent,
The death of slavery sealed with dear heart's blood,
Vicarious sacrifice for other's good!
Much honored name! inscribed upon the scroll,
That o'er the stealer of man's labor stood,
Whoever work of body or mind had stole,
To mulct him for his theft, and shrew the guilty soul."

LXXXI.

"Ye sons of mental toil, who labored hard,
Despising ease, to serve your fellow men,
Sage, legislator, missionary, and bard;
Who woke the sleeping soul of music's strain,
Who raised aloft the cloud-ascending fane,
Who made from wedded colors life appear,
The marble smile with joy, or grieve with pain,
Who weighed the planets, gauged the solar sphere,
Who walked the ocean's floor, and trod the paths of air."

LXXXII.

"Greater than kings that sowed the earth with blood,
And reaped a Golgotha, ye were allured
By love or duty, and your task pursued
With will unconquered, though ye scorn endured
From them to whom ye benizons assured:
Who tamed the water-snake, and who subdued
The dragon steam, in iron bonds secured,
And made them work for man's colossal good;
And who with lettered tongues the lighning's flash endued."

LXXXIII.

"All benefactors of your race, receive
Your titled recompense! To something higher
Than earth's applause which had short time to live
You are invited, that ye may aspire
To laud eternal. Sunshine here respire,
And drink pure draughts of light, without eyes see,
And hear with inward sense; through fluxing fire,
Through binding frost, imperishable flee:
The laurel still is green when roses fade and die."

LXXXIV.

"Here bodies dwell in flame, yet burn not, mind
Moves through the ice, nor cold nor chilly feels,
Nor is the soul's illumination blind,
Though in the flambeau of the sun it wheels
Its steadfast flight. Here nature wise reveals
Her inmost heart, and shows unmasked her mien;
The darkness lifts the veil her face that heles,
And worlds discovers where no worlds had been,
And every atom lives, and is what it is seen."

LXXXV.

With Moses, Menou, Plato, and Mahomet
Jesus, the uncontaminated soul,
Holds grand discourse, elaborately set
With thoughts ubiquitous, until the whole
Of ethic problems solved before them roll,
A Gospel stereotyped by Truth with fire,
For seraphs touch his lips with living coal:
All was an infinite harmony, that higher
Man might ascend in life, and up to God aspire:

LXXXVI.

Sin on the flesh was grafted to corrupt,
And pain was budded as a thorn to sting,
That death the mortal tissues might disrupt,
And mercy to a resurrection bring
The body in the Heaven's perennial spring:
All he expounded—what were space and time,
Matter and mind—how linked to everything;
What conscience was, what virtue, vice, and crime,
And how from tenuous breath was sculptured life
sublime.

LXXVII.

They hear the soft tones of that gentle voice,
  Which once had been the Conquerer o'er death;
They see the laurel of immortal joys,
  The guerdon of the good, that brow enwreath,
  Which had been torn the bleeding spines beneath;
The beatific vision of that mien,
  As peace benignant, and as firm as faith,
That smile of sympathy, like Heaven serene,
The canonized enthronement of the Nazarene.

LXXXVII.

While thus the Lord of Christianity,
  And Shepherd of all souls, on truth and love
And life descanted, in another sky
  Aurora roofed, through a sequestered grove
  Of Trees of Knowledge, unforbidden, rove
Sages, and marvels that surpass our sense
  To comprehend discuss—the worlds above,
And worlds below, what are they, and from whence?
And think again the thoughts of God's intelligence.

LXXXIX.

And in their intuitions wisdom wrought
  The plenitude of sapience and of power,
So that whatever they on earth had sought
  Dimly, creation through her boundless store
  Discloses, registers engrossed of lore:
They calculate the length of cycloid years,
  The distance to the farthest filmy shore,
Know what colures engird the polar spheres,
And to what bourn occult the stellar host careers.

XC.

The source of motion, and the cause of sound
They penetrate, and plumb the skies to tell
The dark arcana of their depths profound—
What is attraction and repulsion's spell—
And in what medium light and darkness dwell.
These abstruse axioms Priestley and Liebnitz read
In valid arguments, infallible,
That unsophisticated science thread,
And trace its complex mazes to their Fountain Head.

XCI.

Where fringed with woolly gold the dappled clouds,
Grained with an evening glory, gorgeous roll
O'er turquoise lakes and swales of jacinth, crowds
Of poets, smit by holy fancy, stroll,
No longer musing tales of piquant dole,
But themes of beauteous grandeur, pleased to praise
The good and noble without jealous soul;
Their regal foreheads with immortals blaze,
That wreathe their coronets of welded rainbow rays.

XCII.

Through mist and fog, untouched by shivering cold,
Unscathed by melting heat, unscorched by thunder,
Past the blue fields of space their paths they hold,
Cutting the plains of liquid light asunder,
And the dark crypts of chaos, spent with wonder,
Dazzled explore; planets sequaceous wheeling,
And moons revolving past them, on they wander
Where double suns are round each other reeling,
And galaxies of worlds from dust to life are stealing.

XCIII.

As glides the albatross, nor flaps a wing,
Over the effervescence of a sea
Of tumbling waves, so motionless they fling
Their flight circuitous, and silently
Swoop o'er the whirlpools of eternity
Through ether oceans to the star-laved beach,
New beauties to admire, true Poesy!
It is the mind that makes the body rich,
And truths most marvelous the highest poems teach.

XCIV.

The burning glass of the empyrean,
Brushed by their passage through the world-dust rare,
Flashes; and as the floss their tresses fan,
They breathe the alkahest of vital air,
Sweet peace and hopeful trust, exempt from care:
Strange constellations glister in the sky,
The novel wardrobe which the Heavens wear,
New life, new worlds, built wheresoe'er they fly,
With square and compass, by the Architect on High.

XCV.

Such flowers as bloomed with first love in our youth
Carpet their feet, which on the roses tread,
As summer shadows fall on cloudlets smooth:
They list the rythmal rhapsodies that lead
The concert of the spheres, heard by the dead,
Eliminated from all stain of ill:
The diapason floats o'er wood and mead,

From the far sea shore to the fir-clad hill,
And waves and waves of song the dome celestial fill.

XCVI.

But the chief of these favored scalds of Heaven
Are chosen choristers before the Throne
Of the Eternal, and to them is given
The task symphonious pæans to intone,
And celebrate the Father and the Son,
The perfect God, and perfect Man, and all
Created life, together joined in One
Divinity of Love, throughout the Hall
Of Paradise, when God holds highest festival.

XCVII.

Hark the strain flowing in a sea of sound,
Surging and swelling with the organ's base,
Till in the heart the notes delirious bound,
Then sink in silent tones of tender grace:
Again the thunders of the chorus race
From the pearl gates, and pealing anthems rise;
Halleluiahs and halleluiahs pace
The Heavens round, and trembling harmonies
Reverberate along the repercussing skies!

TIME of all things the evolution is!
Another day of joy and grief is dawning,
And soon will rise, too soon, another morning,
Till hours set in eternity's abyss:
Whilome the snowdrop on the turf was blowing,
But yesterday the rose and lily bloomed,
Shrouded in autumn leaves, their honors tombed
In winter's frost, await spring's sunshine glowing.

Time the sweet grace of all perfection is!
The past lies fallow, plow the present hour,
And sow the seed that sprouts a human flower,
To burst in beauty, and to blaze in bliss:
Hope's whisper is the oracle of Truth;
The stars are prophets that in Heaven write,
The flowers poets that on earth indite
This lesson, God is God of Love and Ruth.

Oh teach me how to raise the thankful psalm,
That on the weakness of my lama back
Thou hast not laid the camel's heavy pack,
But in my wounds poured wine of healing balm!
Lift me where thrones and sceptred muses throng,
Where glories vault the quivering arch with fire,
And chanting faith that 's born of love the choir
Is rapt in holy ecstasy of song!

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